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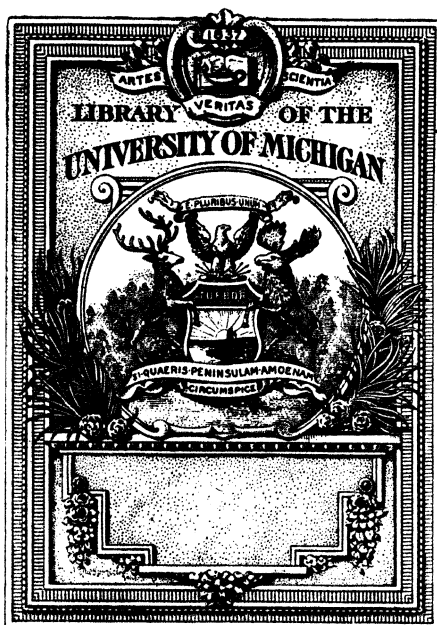
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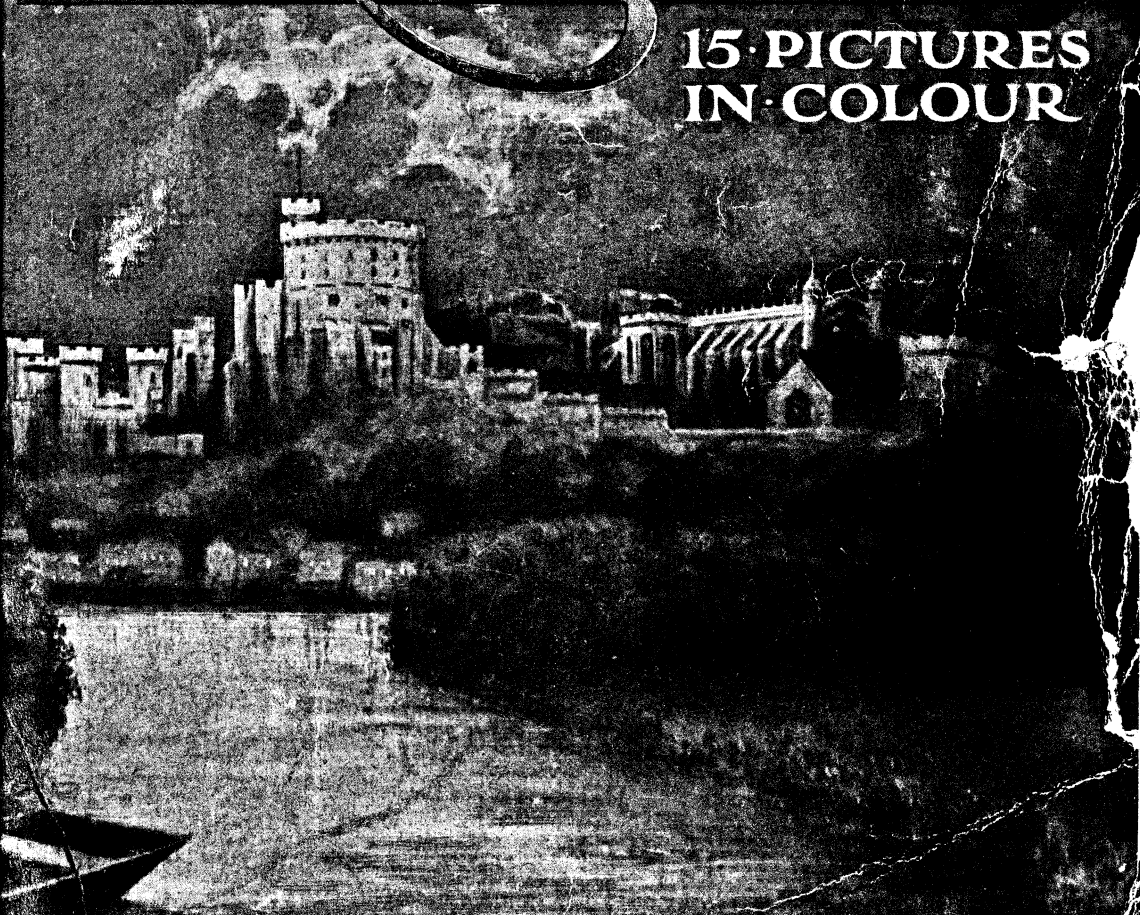


Contributors A.E.W. Mason, W.B. Maxwell,  
Cutcliffe Hyne, Mrs. Thurston, W.J. Locke,  
Robert Barr, Barry Pain, Eden Phillpotts,  
F.A. Steel, Justus Miles Forman

# WINDSOR MAGAZINE

GENERAL  
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"CHRIST AND A LITTLE CHILD." BY GEORGE W. JOY.

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"A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM." BY WRIGHT BARKER.

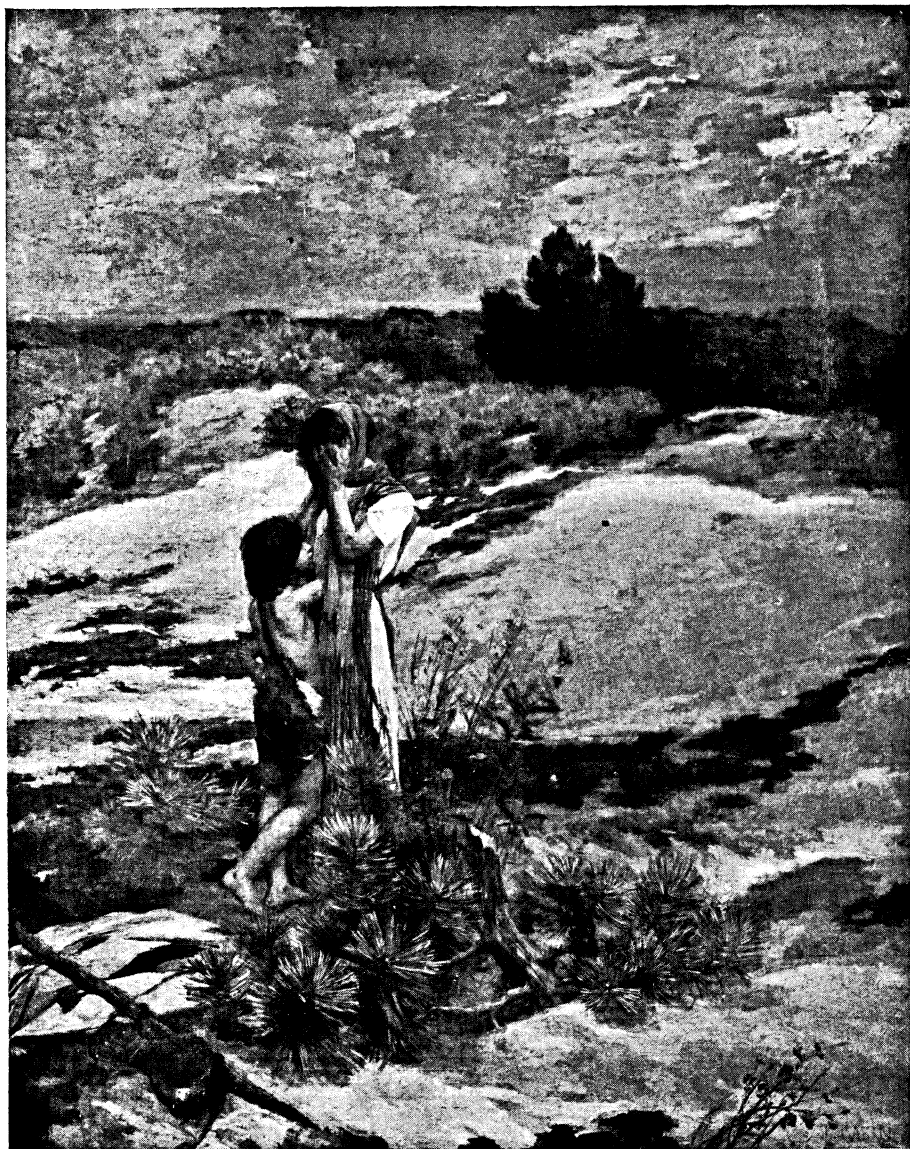
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## THE CHILDREN OF THE BIBLE IN MODERN ART.

THE office of poet is not that of moralist, neither is the duty of painter that of preacher, yet both poet and painter convey to those who study their works an extraordinary "wisdom in the things of practice." The painter speaks to us in the persuasive vocabulary of colour, and, in the high pitch of art to which, on occasion, he attains, we see the impassioned labour that has produced it. Akin he is to the poet, for that to which he gives birth holds something for those who feel the fascination of poetry. Pictures, like poems, being full of thought and feeling, should carry the reality of depicted scenes to our consciousness; but properly to do this the painter must possess a sort of truthful invention, and his work

must be the transcript not alone of mere fact, but of fact inspired and transfused by his inner vision. By this means he lends his genius to the instruction of those less gifted than himself.

Over the canvases of the Old Masters the smoke of the altar-fire of Time has passed, leaving upon them a sort of religious haze, and we have come to accept their almost technically faultless presentment of Christian events as inspired. But there is a narcotic in custom, and we must welcome men such as Millais, Rossetti, Holman Hunt, G. F. Watts, and others yet more modern, who have used their talents in the same field, and, with an equipoise of inspiration and expression, have in our own day given to us



"HAGAR AND ISHMAEL." BY J. C. CAZIN.

*From the original in the Luxembourg Gallery. Reproduced from the photograph published by Neuerdein Frères, Paris.*

new readings of old scenes with a definiteness of imagery, and a sincerity of realism, which seem the special attribute of what we may, for want of a better term, call religious art.

Therefore in this article which considers the youthful characters of the Old and New Testaments as represented in modern art, we have no hesitation in going over somewhat the same ground which we have already traversed in our previous article on The Women of the Bible as painted by latter-day artists.

Children in the Bible collectively join hands in intimate alliance, and wander through the sacred books of the Old and New Testaments. Thus linked, often shadowy, spoken of as the gifts of God, we come upon them in most of the Books of the Old Testament, from Genesis to Ecclesiastes, as well as in the four Gospels, where they are especially blessed <sup>1</sup> by Christ, and in more than one of the Epistles, and these symbolical children stand in our thoughts





"THE SACRIFICE OF ISAAC." BY W. H. MARGETSON.

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"JOSEPH RELATING HIS DREAM." BY H. R. MULEHAM.

towards the actually named children in the relation of twilight to daylight.

The late Mr. G. F. Watts, R.A., with that peculiar and poetic feeling of mysticism which was set as a seal upon his art, shows us a group of these sainted and ensky'd children in his picture "The Spirit of Christianity," and that painting, in a feeling above the differences of creeds, he dedicated "to all the Churches." Sir Joshua Reynolds' "Angels' Heads" belongs to this class of subject; as does the famous series of medallions in white on blue ground, of Andrea della Robbia's babies, those small, white, swaddled bodies, each in a different

pose, which are sculptured to follow one another along the *façade* of the Foundling Hospital, Florence. "The Hymn of Praise," by Giovanni Boccati, at Perugia, is similarly a symbolic picture.

Such pictures may well stand as emblematic of the unnamed children in the sacred books: those "flowers of an invisible world."

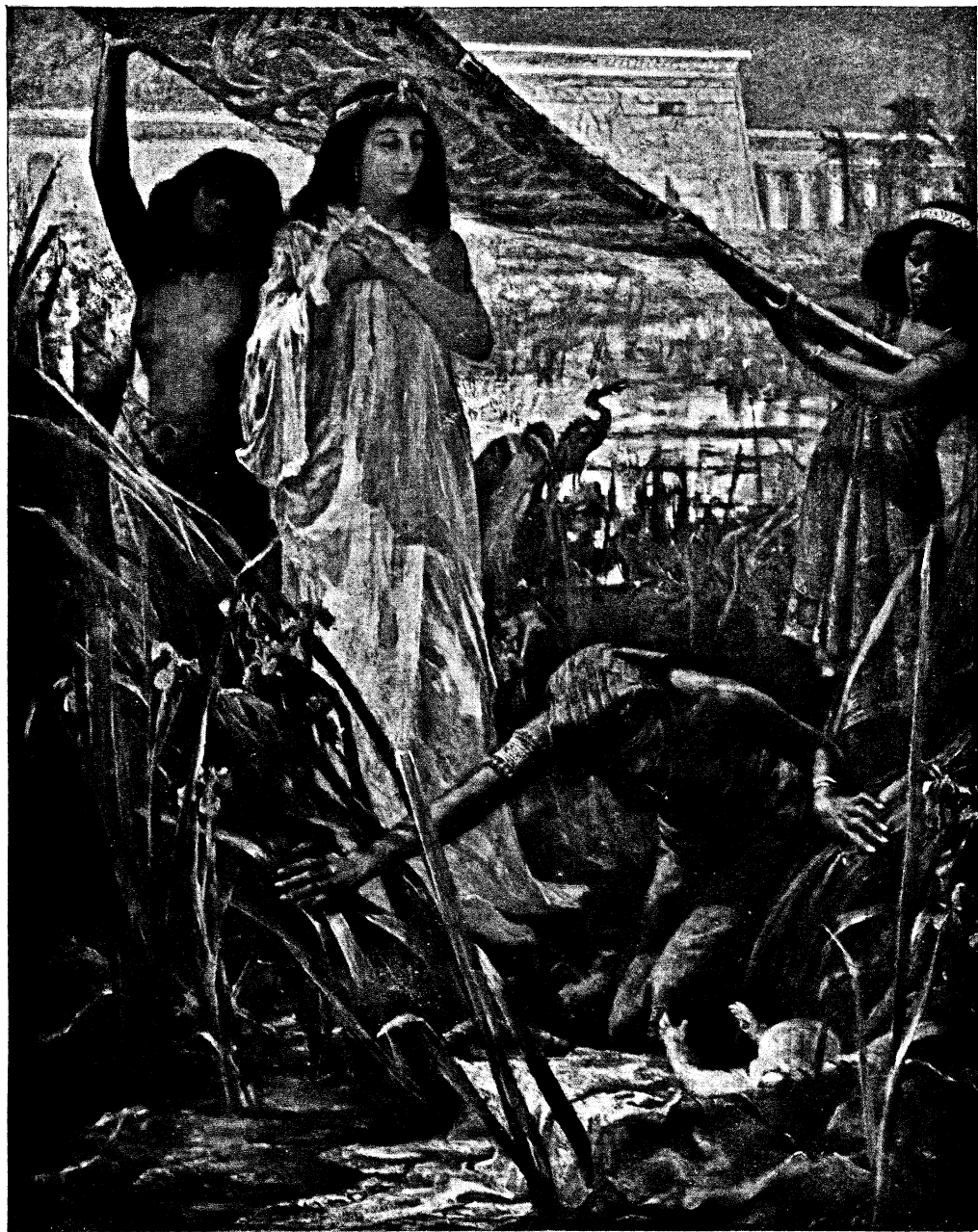
Among modern pictures a notable example of this symbolical presentation of childhood may be seen in "The Triumph of the Innocents," by W. Holman Hunt, telling the story of how Joseph arose, "took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt." This picture shows, as



"THE RETURN OF THE DOVE TO THE ARK." BY SIR JOHN EVERETT MILLAIS, BART., P.R.A.

*Reproduced by permission of the Visitors of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.*





"THE FINDING OF THE INFANT MOSES BY PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER."

By J. YOUNG HUNTER.

*From the original in the collection of Marcus Van Raalte, Esq.*

hovering escort to the Holy Babe, the infant forms of the Holy Innocents of Herod's cruel massacre.

Another symbolical child that has inspired several latter-day artists is the youthful figure of the prophecy of Our Lord contained in the beautiful passage in the Book of Isaiah which foreshadows the ideal Peace amid the world's creatures when "A little child shall lead them." Mr. Wright Barker's version of this holy vision is reproduced as the head-piece to the present article, but we have been unable to obtain permission to include either of Mr. William Strutt's two slightly different renderings of the same theme.

The children mentioned collectively in the New Testament in such passages as that of Our Lord's "Suffer little children to come unto Me," have likewise been symbolically presented in many a modern picture—but these we must consider in the part of this article which refers more particularly to the New Testament.

It is, perhaps, somewhat curious that any attempt to present pictures of the more youthful characters of the Old Testament in chronological order finds but few modern

artists inspired by the first children named in the Biblical narrative, Cain and Abel, the children of Adam and Eve.

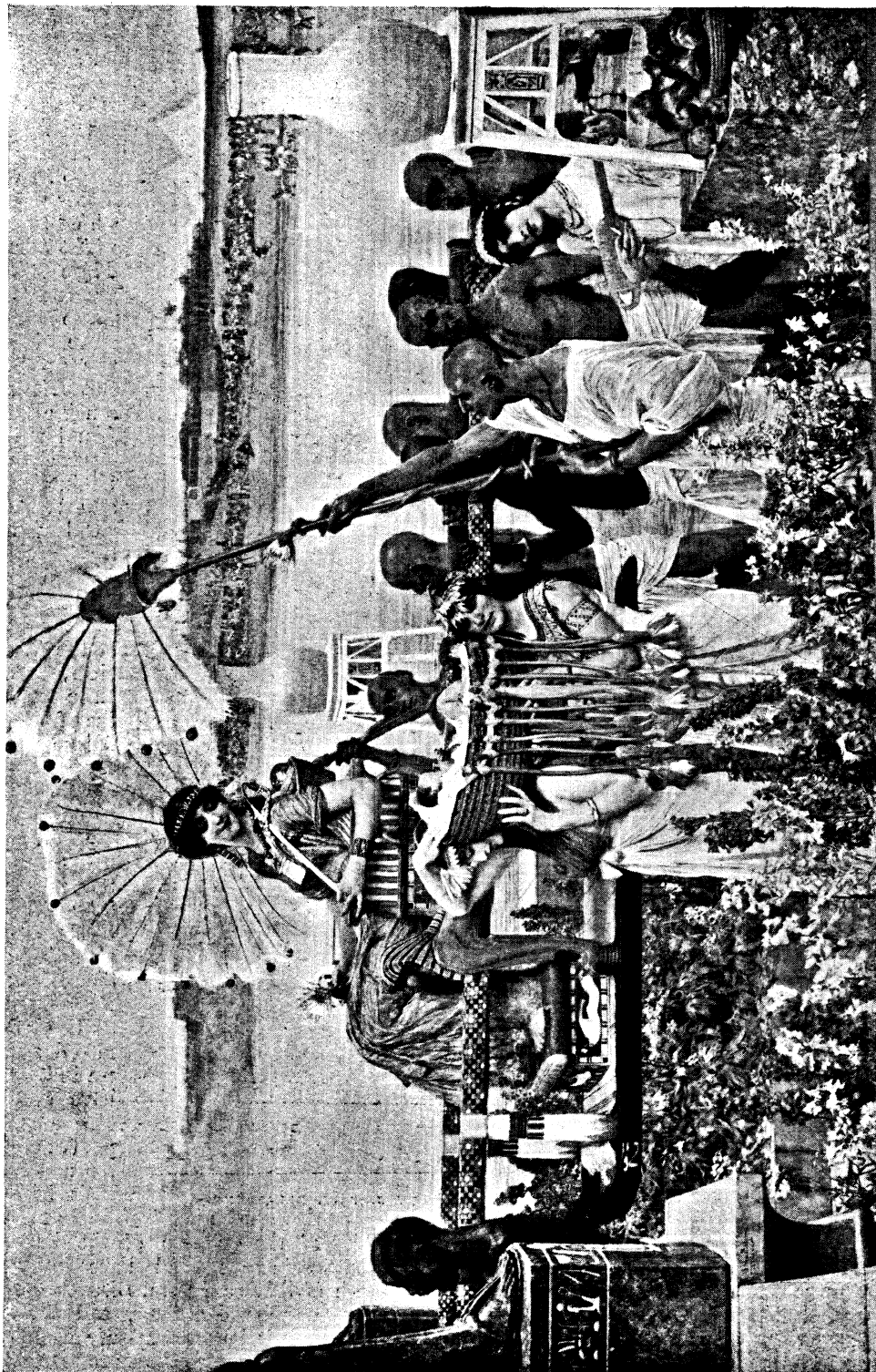
In Raphael's pictures of the Creation in the Loggia of the Vatican we find the first children of the Book of Genesis, at the ages of about four and five, at the knees of Eve, who sits spinning under some roughly made

shelter, whilst Adam digs the ground at some distance from the group. But Michelangelo, Luini, Raphael of Urbino, and others of the "Old Masters" were all more interested in the wonders of the Creation, and then with the fall of Adam and Eve and their expulsion from the Garden of Eden, than in their later life of toil and parenthood. Sir Edward Burne-Jones and other modern painters have shown the same preference for the earlier period of

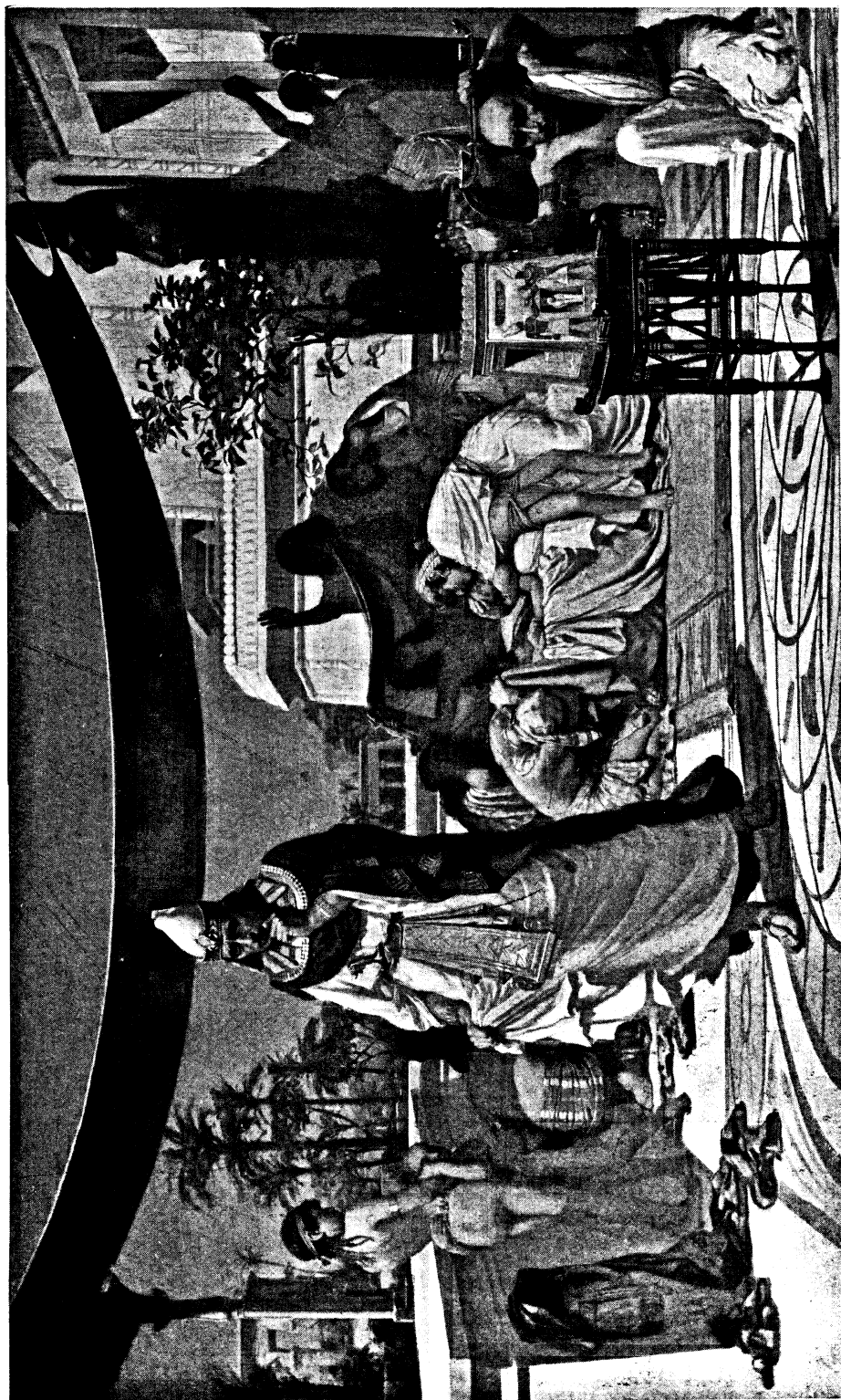


"MOSES IN THE BULRUSHES." BY J. PAUL DELAROCHE.

the story of the Creation of the human race, but Cain and Abel have inspired the brush of Salvatore Rosa, Dietrich, Lord Leighton, Camille Bellanger, and W. A. Bouguereau. It is, however, in early manhood that all these artists have chosen to represent the first children of the Bible's story, passing at once to the grim tragedy of the first death.



"THE FINDING OF MOSES." BY SIR LAURENCE ALMA TADEMA, R.A.  
*Reproduced by permission of the Berlin Photographic Company, New Bond Street, W.*



"THE DEATH OF PHARAOH'S FIRSTBORN." BY ERNEST NORMAND.

*Reproduced by permission of the Artist. Copyright strictly reserved.*





THE INFANT SAMUEL—"SPEAK, LORD, FOR THY SERVANT HEARETH!" BY JAMES SANT, R.A.

*Reproduced from the print published by the Woodbury Permanent Photographic Company, Great New Street, E.C.*

Probably the next in historical order of any children to be painted in a picture from the story of Genesis are the unnamed offspring of Cain, whom Fernand Cormon shows at the knees of their banished father, in the dramatic painting which hangs in the Luxembourg Gallery.

Children of an artist's fancy, also, are the slim maidens of Millais' exquisite picture "The Return of the Dove to the Ark" who welcome back to the shelter of their own

youth the wandering dove that could find no home upon the face of the waters of the Flood. Another version of this moment, by the French artist, Gustave Brion, shows Noah himself receiving the homing bird, while the daughters, grown women, peer forth to watch. Save for the seventeen-year-old Joseph, the girlish figures of Millais' picture are the oldest in years of the youthful characters represented in our



"SAMUEL AMID THE OFFERINGS AT THE TABERNACLE." BY WILLIAM STRUTT.

*Reproduced by permission from the original in the collection of W. W. Clark, Esq.*

present gallery, but they have still the idyllic grace of childhood. No detailed account is given by the Bible narrative of

actual episodes or events in the early lives of individual children between the first youth of the Garden of Eden and the story of



"ELISHA RAISING THE SHUNAMMITE'S SON." BY LORD LEIGHTON.

*Reproduced by permission of the Leighton House Committee.*

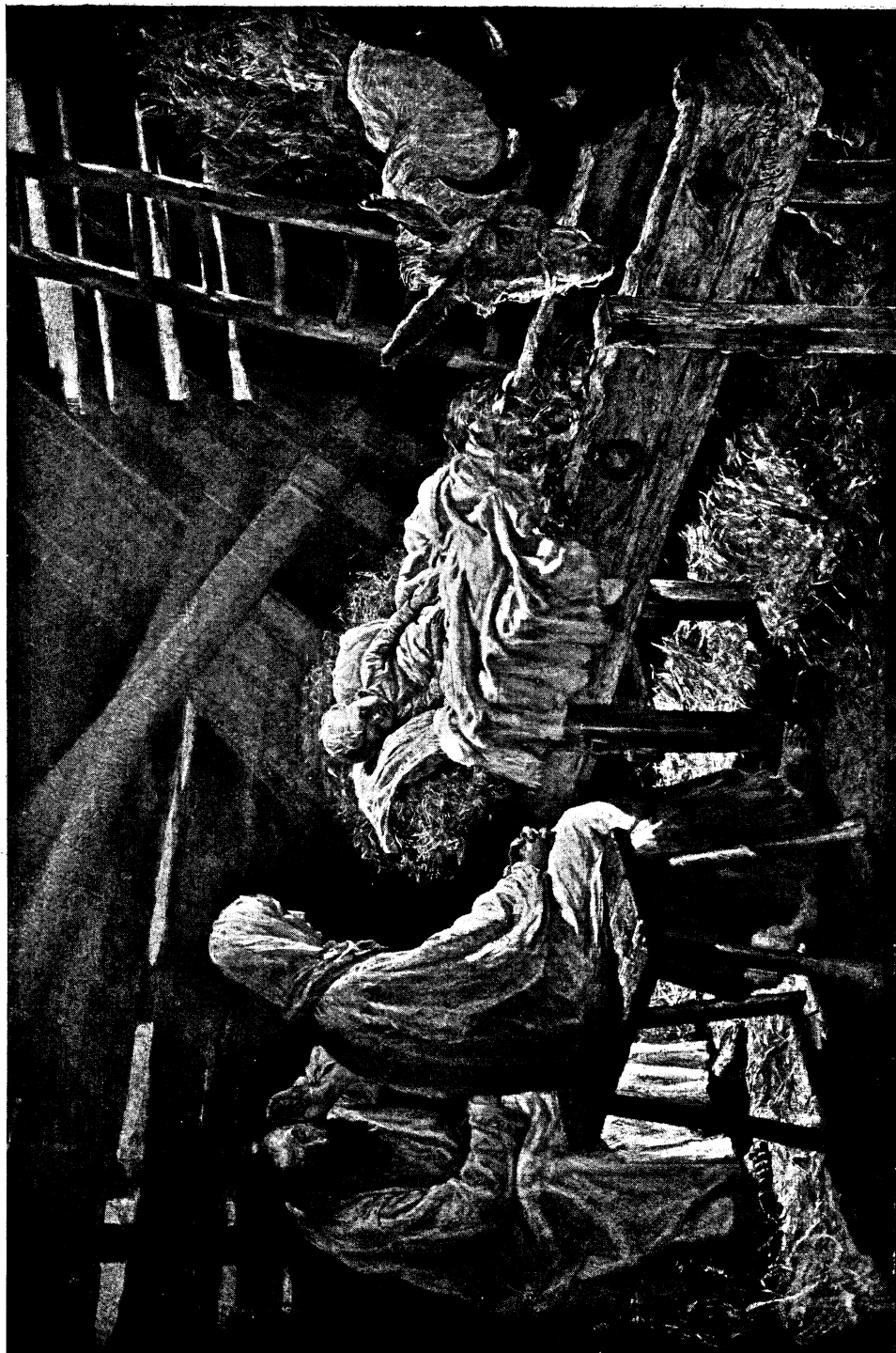


"THE GIRLHOOD OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN." BY DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

*From a photograph by F. Hollyer, Pembroke Square, W.*

Ishmael, and in considering the many pictures of this dramatic theme we find painters so little the slaves of their predecessors' example, or even of any striving after accuracy, that we get considerable discrepancies in the age of the boy. Ishmael was thirteen, we are told, at the time of the expulsion; but in the picture by Adrian van der Werff,

in the Dresden Gallery, he is an undersized boy of four. Murillo, in his picture of the same subject, makes him about six or seven. Of modern artists, both Gustave Doré and J. Doyle Penrose represent the boy as small for his age, but George Hitchcock gives him another year or two. In the pathetic picture of J. C. Cazin, in the Louvre,



"THE DREAM OF THE CHILD CHRIST." BY JOSEF VON MENCINA KRZESZ.  
*Reproduced by permission of the Berlin Photographic Company, New Bond Street, W.*



the boy scarcely reaches his mother's shoulder. Gustave Doré shows him as a child of ten, at most, lying at death's door on the sand of the desert, and, "a good way off," the sorrowful mother, who has said: "Let me not see the death of the child!"

Two other modern French artists differ widely over this theme, for A. E. Dinet

have handled this theme Mr. R. C. W. Bunny and Mr. Harry R. Milham have painted the boy as of about that age, but Mr. W. H. Margetson makes him a much younger child.

There is no occasion for doubt on the part of a painter as to the age at which the youthful Joseph should first be represented, for the Bible narrative states that he was



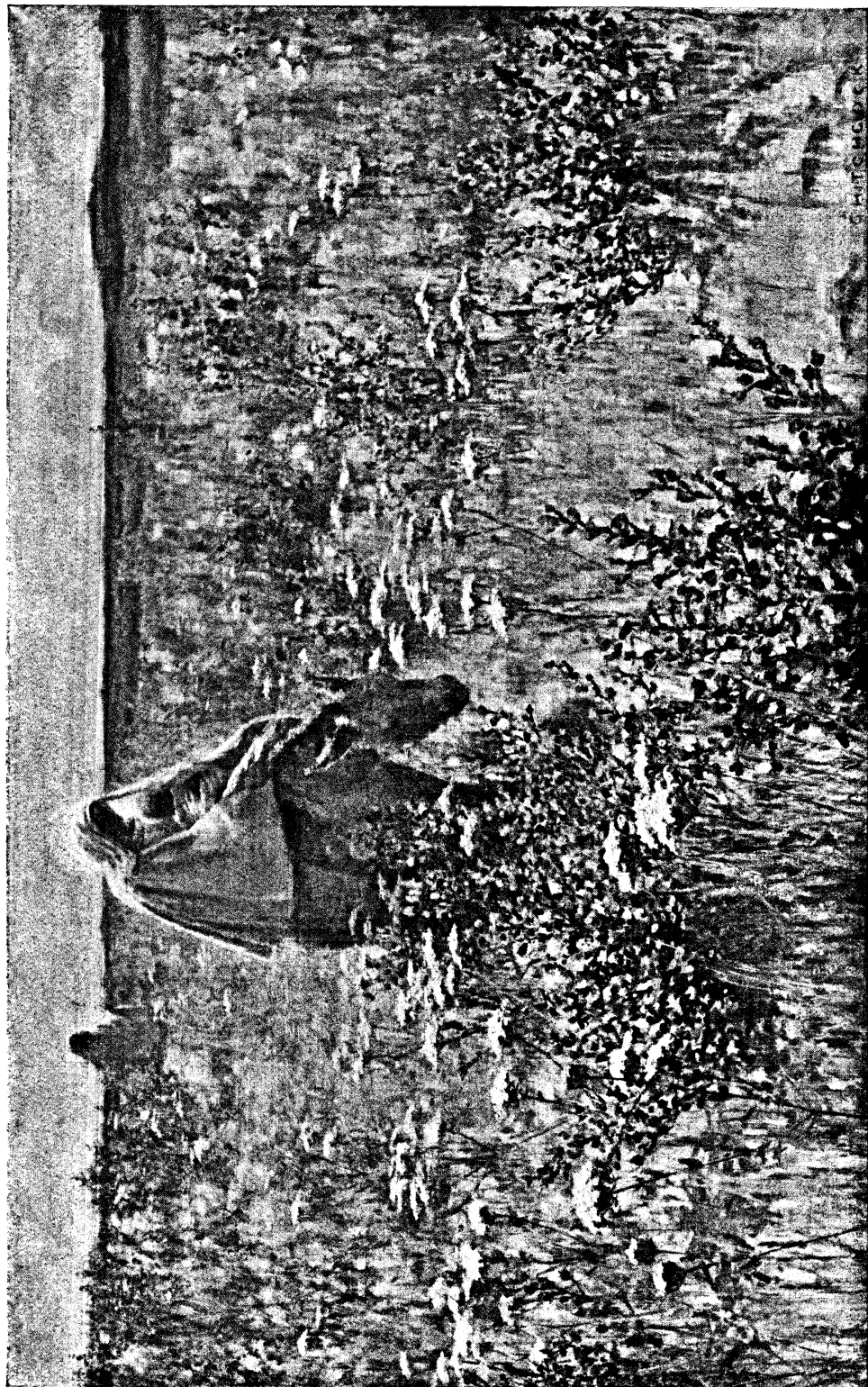
"THE CHRIST CHILD AND HIS MOTHER, WITH ST. ELIZABETH AND THE INFANT JOHN THE BAPTIST."  
BY CARL MÜLLER.

*Reproduced by permission of the Berlin Photographic Company, New Bond Street, W.*

depicts the boy as small enough to be carried, as a mere baby, slung across his mother's shoulders, while Madame Virginie Demont-Breton paints him as a Nubian boy of some ten or twelve years.

The years of Isaac at the moment of his preparation for sacrifice by his father were represented by Andrea del Sarto as about fifteen or sixteen, and of modern artists who

seventeen years old at the time of his two dreams and the episode of the coat of many colours. Yet Raphael of Urbino depicted him as a boy of some twelve or thirteen summers, telling his elder brethren of his visions, and Rembrandt painted him full young for seventeen at the time of his father's favouritism. But modern artists from Thomas Stothard and James Northcote



"THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT." BY GEORGE HITCHCOCK.

*Reproduced by permission of the Artist. Copyright strictly reserved.*



"THE BOYHOOD OF CHRIST." BY J. J. TISSOT.

*Reproduced by permission of M. de Brunoff et Cie, Imprimerie Moderne, Paris.*

to Harry R. Mileham have followed the text and presented him as a youth of seventeen.

Thereafter the Joseph in Egypt of the artists has become a stalwart young man, and the only picture representing childhood before the story of the infancy of Moses is that of the blessing of Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, by their grandfather, Jacob. A drawing of this episode by F. R.

Pickersgill shows the sons of Joseph as growing lads.

Fashions of inspiration change in the case of most subjects, but not so in that of the finding of the infant Moses afloat on the waters of the Nile. There is a curious drawing of the thirteenth century in the British Museum which shows Miriam watching the child, who is entirely unconscious of danger. There are in the Louvre two pictures of this subject by Nicolas Poussin. There is also a gorgeous Giorgione in the Pitti Palace which is by some accredited to Bonifacio; but, as Bonifacio has already, in the Brera Gallery, a "Moses," that in the Pitti Gallery may quite possibly be by that greatest of all colorists. In Raphael's Bible the theme is elaborated, and a number of women look on at the launch of the frail

bark which, in Eugène Thirion's modern picture, now in the Luxembourg, has floated away into a position which seems one of considerable peril. Frederick Goodall chose the

earlier moment of the child's abandonment by his mother, and achieved a very pathetic presentment of misery and anxiety in the expression on the face of Jochebed, who, in his picture, is about to lay the nestling child in a reed basket. Another

modern man, much more modern than the preceding two, Mr. J. Young Hunter, has chosen for his version of the subject the moment when

Pharaoh's daughter, Thermutis, found the boy. We can

ignore the Coptic legend which tells of Pharaoh's daughter as being a leper magically healed by the infant's touch. The most popular of all the pictures of the finding of Moses is that by Delaroche, but a more important work altogether is that by Sir Laurence Alma-Tadema, which shows not merely the small group of Pharaoh's daughter and her hand-maidens, but a kind of triumphal procession in which, borne on a litter, while her maidens bear the infant in its cradle shoulder-high, the princess passes with her foundling away from the river-bank to the palace. Those who have seen the original painting of this picture will recall especially the gorgeous colouring of the flowers that are massed in the

foreground. There are yet other pictures of the child Moses, of which not the least beautiful is that by Lauder, who bore, in the middle of the last century, no inconspicuous



"THE CHILD CHRIST AND ST. JOSEPH." BY CARL MÜLLER.

Reproduced by permission of the Berlin Photographic Company, New Bond Street, W.





"A SHEPHERD BOY'S OFFERING TO THE HOLY CHILD." BY JOSEPH SCHERENBERG.

*Reproduced by permission of Franz Hanfstengl, London and Munich, owner of the copyright and publisher of the large plate.*

part in the replacing of the Scottish school of painting in the prominent position which it now holds. He painted, too, a picture which deals with the subject of Hannah presenting Samuel to Eli, as Frank W. Topham has more recently done; but, of all the pictures of the infant Samuel, the greatest is that by Sir Joshua Reynolds, who was one of the few painters able to paint childhood, and give to it that fresh fragrance, that softness, youth, and beauty which is apart from beauty of either

feature or form. Round-limbed, soft, and with the bloom that lies, not on fruit, but on the petals of some flowers, the children of Sir Joshua blossom on the canvases where he has placed them. His Infant Samuel was a subject which he repeated several times, and it has been many times engraved; besides the picture in the National Gallery there is a duplicate in the Dulwich Gallery.

The subject of Samuel inspired yet another Court painter to good work, and the picture



"THE FINDING OF THE SAVIOUR IN THE TEMPLE." BY W. HOLMAN HUNT.

*From the original in the Public Art Gallery, Birmingham. Reproduced by permission of the Curators, from the photograph by Eyre & Spottiswoode.*

of the kneeling boy, entitled "Speak, for Thy Servant Heareth," by Mr. James Sant, R.A., is amongst the best known of this artist's works. Mr. William Strutt has painted the boy presiding over the offerings brought to the Tabernacle by the devout.

But we have passed on too swiftly, and must turn back to mention the fine picture by Leon Bonnat of the boyhood of Samson, and T. M. Rooke's attractive study of the cherishing of the infant son of Ruth and Boaz by his grandmother Naomi. That child, Obed, became "the father of Jesse, the father of David," and David as a boy, calming the fury of Saul with the strains of his harp, has formed the subject of dramatic pictures by both M. Lefebvre-Lourd and Mr. Ernest Normand, the latter of whom is represented in this article by his powerful painting of the tragic episode of "The Death of Pharaoh's First-born." Of David as the youthful conqueror of Goliath there is a grim painting by Georges Ferrier in the Museum at Nimes, and his return from victory into the presence of Saul has been painted by Madame Louisa Starr Canziani. Mr. H. R. Mileham has illustrated the boyhood friendship of David and Jonathan.

The widow's son restored to life by Elijah forms the subject of one of Ford Madox Brown's finest pictures, and the raising of the Shunammite's son by Elisha has been impressively represented by Lord Leighton.

"The Little Syrian Maid" of Mr. F. W. Topham was included in our former article on *The Women of the Bible*, to illustrate the story of Naaman and his wife.

The first child of the New Testament chronicled in art is St. John the Baptist, whom Fra Lippo Lippi painted taking leave of his parents, and as a child of no more than seven or eight setting forth to the wilderness. The modern painter Tissot also shows him as quite a child, alone in the wilderness, with fawns and other shy young creatures for his playmates.

Pictures inspired by the subjects of the Nativity, the Adoration of the Magi, and the earliest infancy of Our Lord, are altogether too numerous, and too well-known to be mentioned here individually, but as records of the progressive life of the child Christ a few modern works stand prominently forth. Mr. Holman Hunt's

"The Triumph of the Innocents" has already been mentioned as a presentment of symbolical childhood. This differs in many essentials from all other pictures of the Flight into Egypt. "Signal fires"—still lit in Syria in time of trouble—are burning, and as the Holy Family move across the Philistine plain, which they crossed on the road to Gaza, Joseph is seen, in the picture, to be keeping a watchful eye for any sign of movement amongst the soldiery on the road. Holman Hunt's art is unlike that of any other painter, although in choosing this theme he comes after Ghirlandajo's frescoes in the church of S. Maria Novello, Florence, Fra Angelico's in S. Marco, Venice, and those of Matteo di Giovanni in Siena, all of which deal with the same subject, as did Raphael in a cartoon for a series of tapestries from the Life of Christ, part of which is in the National Gallery. In modern times Jan Steer, Robert Scott Lauder, S. H. Vedder, and George Hitchcock have painted pictures of the same theme. For the wonder of its conception Holman Hunt's picture is perhaps the greatest, but Mr. Hitchcock's exquisite study of light in the flower-decked wilderness, and the reverent purity of feeling which characterises his picture, combine to make it a very fine contribution to Sacred Art. "Christ in the House of His Parents," by Sir John Millais; "The Youth of Our Lord," by J. R. Herbert; "The Finding of the Saviour in the Temple," by Holman Hunt; and J. J. Tissot's many paintings, are notable examples of the dignity and spirituality of modern art in its representations of the life of Christ, but the names of painters who have been especially inspired by the story of the Gospels are legion, and space forbids further enumeration. Thus does art bind the ages "each to each in natural piety."

Of the children who were privileged to play a part in the life and teaching of Our Lord, the painters have chosen primarily the "little child" signalled out for the Divine blessing, and the general group of children included in the speech: "Suffer little children to come unto Me," a moment beautifully rendered in a modern reredos by Mrs. Lea Merriitt. Most artists have also regarded the son of the woman of Nain as quite a young boy—"The only son of his mother, and she was a widow."

# GREEN PAINT.

By A. E. W. MASON.



CAME up by the lift from the lower town, Harry Vandeleur strolled from his more respectable lodging in the upper quarter, and we met unexpectedly in Government Square.

It was ten o'clock in the morning, and the Square, a floor of white within a ragged border of trees, glared blindingly under the tropical sun. On each side of the President's door a diminutive soldier rattled a rifle from time to time.

"What? Has he sent for you too?" said Harry, pointing to the President's house.

"Juan Pablo. Yes," said I, and Harry Vandeleur stopped with a sudden suspicion on his face.

"What does he want with us?" he asked.

"We volunteered in the war," said I.

"We were both useful to him."

Harry Vandeleur shook his head.

"He is at the top of his power. He has won his three-weeks war. The Army has made him President for the second time of the Republic of Maldivia. He has so skilfully organised his elections that he has a Parliament, not merely without an Opposition, but without a single man of any note in it except Don Felipe Halvera. It is not from such that humble people like us can expect gratitude."

Juan Pablo was, in fact, a very remarkable person. I came to have a considerable knowledge of him afterwards, and I noticed that very few people who had dealings with him ever forgot him. There was the affair of the Opera House, for instance, and a hundred other cases. Who he really was I should think no one knew. He used to say that he was born in Mexico City, and when he wished to get the better of anyone with a sentimental turn, he would speak of his old mother in a broken voice. But since he never wrote to his old mother, nor she to him, I doubt very much whether she existed. The only certain fact known about him was that some thirteen years before,

when he was crossing on foot a high pass of the Cordilleras without a dollar in his pocket, he met a stranger—but no! I have heard him attribute so many different nationalities to that stranger that I wouldn't kiss the Bible even on that story. Probably he *was* a Mexican and of a good stock. Certainly no Indian blood made a flaw in him. For though his hair was black and a pencil-line of black moustache decorated his lip, his skin was fair like any Englishman's. He was thirty-eight years old, five feet eleven in height, strongly but not thickly built, and he had a pleasant, good-humoured face which attracted and deceived by its look of frankness. For the rest of him the story must speak.

He received us in a great room on the first floor overlooking the Square; and at once he advanced and laid a hand impressively upon my shoulder. He looked into my face silently. Then he said—

"Carlyon, I want you."

I did not believe him for a moment. None the less my hopes rose. I was living on credit in a very inferior hotel. "I had thought my work was done," he continued. "I had hoped to retire, like Cincinnatus, to my plough," and he gazed sentimentally out of the window across the city to the wooded hills of San Paulo. "But since my country calls me, I must have someone about me whom I can trust." He broke off to ask: "I suppose your police are no longer searching for you?"

"They never were, your Excellency," I protested hotly.

"Well, perhaps not," he said indulgently. "No doubt the natural attractions of Maldivia brought you here. You did me some service in the war. I am not ungrateful. I appoint you my private secretary."

"Your Excellency!" I cried.

He shook hands with me and added carelessly—

"There is no salary attached to the post, but there are—opportunities."

And there were. That is why I now live in a neat little villa at Sorrento.

Juan Pablo turned to Harry Vandeleur and took him by the arm. He looked from one to the other of us.



"Ever since the day when I walked over a high pass of the Cordilleras with nothing but the clothes I stood up in, and an unknown Englishman gave me the railway fare to this city, I have made what return I could to your nation. You, too, have served me, Signor Vandeleur. I pay some small portion of my debt. Money! I have none to give you"; and he uttered the words without a blush, although the half a million pounds sterling received as war indemnity had already been paid into his private account.

"Nor would you take it if I had," Juan Pablo resumed. "But I will give you something of equal value."

He led Vandeleur to the window, and waving his hand impressively over the city, he said—

"I will give you the monopoly of green paint in the city of San Paulo."

I stifled a laugh. Harry Vandeleur got red in the face. For, after all, no man likes to look a greater fool than he naturally is. He had, moreover, a special reason for disappointment.

"I don't suppose that there are twenty bucketsful used in San Paulo in the year," he exclaimed bitterly.

"Wait, my friend," said Juan Pablo; "there will be."

He was right. For a week afterwards the following proclamation appeared upon the walls of the public buildings:—

"Owing to the numerous complaints which have been received of the discomfort produced by the glare of a tropical sun, the Government of the day, ever solicitous to further the wishes of its citizens, now orders that every house in San Paulo, with the exception of the Government buildings, be painted in green paint within two months of the issue of this proclamation, and any resident who fails to obey this enactment shall be liable to a fine of fifty dollars for every day after the two months have elapsed until the order is carried out."

Juan Pablo, to my thinking, was a very great man, but I cannot deny that he strained the loyalty of his friends by this proclamation. Grumbings were loud. No one could discover who had complained of the glare of the streets—for the simple reason that no one had complained at all. However, the order was carried out. Daily the streets of San Paulo grew greener and greener, until the town had quite a restful look, and sank into its background and became a piece with its surroundings. Meanwhile, Harry Vandeleur sat in an office, rubbed his hands,

and put up the price of green paint. But, like most men upon whom good fortune has suddenly shone, he was not quite contented. He found his crumpled rose-leaf in the dingy aspect of the Government buildings and the President's house. They alone now reared fronts of dirty plaster and cracked stucco. I remember him leaning out of Juan Pablo's window and looking up and down with a discontented eye.

"Wants a coat of green paint, doesn't it?" he said with a sort of jocular eagerness.

Juan Pablo never even winked.

"There ought to be a distinction between this house and all the others," he said gravely. "The President is merely the butler of the citizens. They ought to know at a glance where they can find him."

Harry Vandeleur burst suddenly into a laugh. He was an impulsive youth, a regular bubble of high spirits.

"I am an ungrateful beast, and that's the truth," he said. "You have done a great deal for me, more than you know."

"Have I?" asked Juan Pablo drily.

"Yes," cried Harry Vandeleur, and out the story tumbled.

He was very anxious to marry Olivia Halvera—daughter, by the way, of Felipe Halvera, Pablo's Minister of the Interior—and Olivia Halvera was very anxious to marry him. Olivia was a dream. He, Harry Vandeleur, was a planter in a small way in Trinidad. Olivia and her father came from Trinidad. He had followed her from Trinidad, but Don Felipe, with a father's eye for worldly goods, had been obdurate. It was all very foolish and very young, and rather pleasant to listen to.

"Now, thanks to your Excellency," cried Harry, "I am an eligible suitor. I shall marry the Signorita Olivia."

"Is that so?" said Juan Pablo, with a polite congratulation. But there was just a suspicion of a note in his voice which made me lift my head sharply from the papers over which I was bending. It was impossible, of course—and yet he had drawled the words out in a slow, hard, quiet way which had startled me. I waited for developments, and they were not slow in coming.

"But before you marry," said Juan Pablo, "I want you to do me a service. I want you to go to London and negotiate a loan. I can trust you. Moreover, you will do the work more speedily than another, for you will be anxious to return."

With a friendly smile he took Harry Vandeleur by the arm and led him into his

private study. Harry could not refuse. The mission was one of honour, and would heighten his importance in Don Felipe's eyes. He was, besides, under a considerable obligation to Juan Pablo. He embarked accordingly at La Guya, the port of call half an hour away from the city.

"Look after Olivia for me," he said, as we shook hands upon the deck of the steamer.

"I will do the best I can," I said, and I went down the gangway.

Harry Vandeleur travelled off to England. He was out of the way. Meanwhile, I stayed in Maldivia and waited for more developments. But this time they were not so quick in coming.

## II.

THERE was a queer incongruity in Juan Pablo. Like most great men, he was inexplicable. Here is an instance. Although he paid his private secretary with "opportunities" and bribed his friends with monopolies; although he had shamelessly rigged the elections, and paid as much of the country's finances as he could into his private banking account; and although there was that little affair of the Opera House, he was genuinely and sincerely determined to give to the Republic a cast-iron Constitution. He had an overpowering faith in law and order—for other people.

We hammered out the Constitution day and night for another fortnight, and then Juan Pablo gabbled it over to a Council of his Ministers. Not one of them could make head or tail of what he was reading, with the exception of Don Felipe Halvera, a foxy-faced old rascal with a white moustache, who sat with a hand curved about his ear and listened to every word. I had always wondered why Juan Pablo had given him office at all. At one point he interrupted in a smooth, smiling voice—

"But, your Excellency, that is not legal."

"Legal or not legal," said the President with a snap, "it is going to be, Signor Halvera"; and the Constitution was duly passed by a unanimous vote, and became the law of Maldivia.

That event took place a couple of months after Harry Vandeleur had sailed for England. I stretched my arms and looked about for relaxation. The Constitution was passed at six o'clock in the evening. There was to be a ball that night at the house of the British Minister. I made up my mind to go. For a certainty I should find Olivia Halvera

there; and I was seized with remorse. For, in spite of my promise to Harry Vandeleur, I had hardly set eyes upon her during the last two months.

I saw her at ten o'clock. She was dancing—a thing she loved. She was dressed in a white frock of satin and lace, with a single rope of pearls about her throat, and she looked divinely happy. She was a girl of nineteen years, fairly tall, with black hair, a beautiful white face, and big, dark eyes which shone with kindness. She had the hand and foot of her race, and her dancing was rather a liquid movement of her whole supple body than a matter of her limbs. I watched her for a few moments from a corner. She had brains as well as beauty, and though she spoke with a pleading graciousness, at the back of it one was aware of a pride which would crack the moon. She worked, too, as few girls of her station work in the Republics of South America. For her father, from what I thought to be no better than parsimony, used her as his secretary. As she swung by my corner for the second time she saw me and stopped.

"Signor Carlyon, it is two months since I have seen you," she said reproachfully.

"Signorita, it is only four hours since our brand new Constitution was passed into law, and already I am looking for you."

She shook her head.

"You have neglected me."

"I regret, Signorita, to notice," said I, "that my neglect has in no way impaired your health."

Olivia laughed. She had a taking laugh, and the blood mounted very prettily into her cheeks.

"I could hardly be ill," she said. "I had a letter to-day."

"Lucky man to write you letters," said I. "Let me read it, Signorita."

She drew back swiftly and her hand went to her bosom.

"Oh, it is there!" said I.

Again she laughed, but this time with a certain shyness, and the colour deepened on her cheeks.

"He sails to-day," said she.

"Then I have still three weeks," said I lightly. "Signorita, will you dance with me for the rest of the evening?"

"Certainly not," she answered with decision. "But after the fifth dance from now, you will find me, Signor Carlyon, here"; and turning again to her partner, she was caught up into the whirl of dancers.

After the fifth dance I returned to that corner of the ballroom. I found Olivia waiting. But it was an Olivia whom I did not know. The sparkle and the freshness had gone out of her; fear and not kindness shone in her eyes.

Her face lit up for a moment when she saw me, and she stepped eagerly forward.

"Quick!" she said. "Somewhere where we shall be alone!"

Her hand trembled upon my arm. She walked quickly from the room, smiling as she went. She led me along a corridor into the garden of the house, a place of palms and white magnolias on the very edge of the upper town. She went without a word to the railings at the end of the garden, whence one looks straight down upon the lights of the lower town along the river bank. Then she turned. A beam of light from the windows shone upon her face. The smile had gone from it. Her lips shook.

"What has happened, Signorita?" I asked.

She spoke in jerks.

"He came to me to-night. . . . He danced with me . . ."

"Who?" I asked.

"Juan Pablo," said she.

I had half expected the name. None the less it startled me.

"He spoke of himself," she resumed. "Sometimes it is not easy to tell whether he is acting or whether he is serious. It was easy to-night. He was serious."

"What did he say?"

"That up till to-night all had been work with him. . . . That to-night had set the crown upon his work. . . . That now for the first time he could let other hopes, other thoughts, have play . . ."

Olivia was giving me a new view of Juan Pablo. After all, I reflected, he had worked—worked without ceasing for thirteen years; and as a result he had raised what he called his "one-eyed Republic" into an importance which it had never possessed before. The man shone out before my mind in a very sympathetic light and drew my thoughts. Olivia turned them again to herself.

"He asked me to marry him," she said.

"Yes," I said slowly. "Having done his work, he wants his prize. He would. And you—what did you answer?"

"I answered 'No,' of course. But he would not take my answer." A spasm of fear shook her. She clenched her small hands tightly together, and turning her back upon me, she leaned upon the railings. Her eyes travelled along the river below and sought a

distant glare in the sky—the glare of the lights of La Guya. For a little while her eyes remained fixed upon that glare, as though it comforted her with a way of escape. But then she buried her face in her hands and said in so low a voice that I hardly heard the words—

"I am frightened. . . . I am very frightened!"

Coming from her, the low and childish cry filled me with consternation. It was not so much what she said as what she left unsaid, which alarmed me. For there was nothing in her story so far to justify the extremity of her terror. A rivalry between Juan Pablo and Harry Vandeleur would be a troublesome business for her, no doubt. But since she loved Harry Vandeleur, it could be no more than troublesome; and, after all, troublesome things are fairly common in the lives of all of us. No, there was some greater reason for her fears than she had yet given to me, and I waited in a keen suspense for it.

"He spoke of Harry," she resumed. "He said that Harry must not interfere. . . . He used threats."

Yes, I thought, Juan Pablo would do that. It was not the usual way of conducting a courtship; but Juan Pablo's way was not the usual way of governing a country.

"What kind of threats?"

"He spoke of prisons," she answered with a break in her voice.

"Of what?" I exclaimed.

"Yes," she said. "Of prisons—especially in the Northern Republics of South America. . . . He explained that, though you have more liberty here than anywhere else so long as you are free, you are more completely—ruined—here than anywhere else if you once get into prison." From her hesitation I could guess that "ruined" was a milder word than Juan Pablo had used.

"He described them to me," she went on. "Hovels where you sleep in the mud at night, and whence you are leased out by day to work in the fields without a hat—until, in a week or so, the sun puts an end to your misery."

I knew there was truth in that description. But it was not possible that Juan Pablo could put his threat into force. It was anger now, not consternation, which filled me.

"Signorita, reflect!" I cried. "In whose garden are you standing now? The English Minister's—and Harry Vandeleur is an Englishman. It was no more than a brutal piece of bullying by Juan Pablo. See! I



"We looked into a hall silent and empty and brightly lit."



am his secretary"—and she suddenly turned round towards me with a gleam in her eyes.

"Yes," she interrupted. "You are his secretary and Harry's friend. Will you help us, I wonder?"

"How?" said I.

"It is not Harry whom he threatens, but my father"; and she lowered her eyes from mine and was silent.

I drew in a breath sharply. I did, indeed, begin to realise that there was reason in Olivia's fears. I stepped forward and took her hands. They clung to mine in a desperate appeal for help.

"Come, Signorita," I said gravely. "If I am to help you, I must have the truth. What grounds had Juan Pablo for his threat?"

She raised her head suddenly with a spurt of her old pride.

"My father is a good man," she said, challenging me to deny it. "What he did, he thought right to do. I am not ashamed of him. No!"—and then she would have stopped. But I would not let her. I dared not let her.

"Come, Signorita!" I insisted, and the pride died out of her face, and she turned in a second to pleading.

"But perhaps he was indiscreet—in what he wrote. He thought, perhaps, too much of his country, too little of those who governed it."

I dropped her hands. I had enough of the truth now. Rumour had always spoken of Don Felipe as an intriguer. Don Felipe's daughter was telling me he was a traitor, too.

"We must find your father," I cried. "He brought you to the hall."

"Yes," said she. "He will be waiting to take me home."

We hurried back to the house and searched the rooms. Don Felipe was nowhere to be found.

"He cannot have gone!" cried Olivia, wringing her hands. In both of our minds the same question was urgent.

"Has he been taken away?"

I questioned the servants, and the door-keeper replied. A messenger had come for Don Felipe early in the evening. I found the British Minister at Olivia's side when I returned, and a smile of relief upon her face.

"My father made his excuses and went home," she said. "Important business came. He has sent the carriage back."

"May I take you home?" I asked.

"Thank you," said she.

It was getting near to dawn when we drove away. The streets were empty, the houses dark. Olivia kept her face close to the window, and never stirred until we turned the corner into the Calle Madrid. Then she drew back with a low cry of joy. The windows of the great house were ablaze with light. I helped her out of the carriage and rang the bell. We stood in front of the door talking while the coachman drove away to his stables.

"Say nothing to my father," Olivia pleaded. "Promise me, Signor."

I promised readily enough. I knew very well Don Felipe would be insistent that she should marry Juan Pablo.

"I will come in with you, Signorita," I said. "I must talk with your father"; and I turned impatiently to the door and rang the bell again.

"To-night?" said she.

"Yes," said I. "I promised Harry Vandeleur to look after you."

"Did you?" said she, and though her anxieties were heavy upon her, a tender smile parted her lips.

Still no one came to the door.

"They must have gone to bed," I said, pushing against the panels. To my surprise the door yielded and quietly swung wide. We looked into a hall silent and empty and brightly lit. We were both in a mood to count each new phenomenon a disaster. To both of us there was something eerie in the silent swinging-in of the door, in the emptiness and bright illumination of the hall. We looked at one another in dismay. Then Olivia swept in, and I followed. She walked straight to a door at the back of the hall, hesitated with her hand upon the knob for just the fraction of a second, and flung it open. We went into a room furnished as a study. But the study, too, was empty and brightly lit. There was a green-shaded reading-lamp beside an armchair, as though but now the occupant had sat there and read. Olivia stood in the centre of the room and in a clear and ringing voice she cried—

"Father!"

Her voice echoed along the passages and up the stairs. And no answer came. She turned abruptly, and, moving with a swift step, she opened door after door. Each door opened upon a brightly lit and empty room. She ran a few steps up the stairs and stood poised, holding up in her white gloved hand the glistening skirt of her white frock. One by one she called upon the servants by name,

looking upwards. Not a door was opened above our heads. Not a sound of any movement reached our ears.

Olivia ran lightly up the stairs. I heard the swift rustle of her gown as she moved from room to room; and suddenly she was upon the stairs again looking down at me, with her hand like a flake of snow upon the bannister. She gleamed against the background of dark wood, a thing of silver.

"There is no one in the house," she said simply, in a strange and quiet voice. She moved down the stairs and held out her hand to me.

"Good night," she said.

Though her voice never shook, her eyes shone with tears. She was but waiting until I went, to shed them.

"I will come to-morrow," I stammered; "in the morning. I may have news for you," and I bent over her hand and kissed it.

"Good night," she said again, and she stood with her hand upon the latch of the door. I went out. She closed the door behind me. I heard the key turn in the lock, the bolt shoot into its socket. There was a freshness in the air, a paling of the stars above my head. I waited for a while in the street, but no figure appeared at any window, nor was any light put out. I left her alone in that empty and illumined house, its windows blazing on the dawn.

### III.

I WALKED back to the President's house and sat comfortably down in my office to think the position over with the help of a pipe. But I had hardly struck the match when the President himself came in. He had changed his dress-coat for a smoking-jacket, and carried a few papers in his hand.

"I am glad to see that you are not tired," he said, "for I have still some work for you to do. I have been looking through some letters, and there are half-a-dozen of so much importance that I should like copies made of them before you go to bed."

He laid them on my writing-table with an intimation that he would return for them in an hour. I rose up with alacrity. I was in no mood for bed, and the mechanical work of copying a few letters appealed to me at the moment. A glance at them, however, startled me into an even greater wakefulness. They were letters, typewritten for the most part, but undoubtedly signed by Don Felipe, and all of them dated just before the outbreak of the war. They were addressed to the War Minister of Esmeralda, and they

gave details as to where Maldivia was weak, where strong, what roads to the capital were unguarded, and for how many provisions could be requisitioned on the way. There was, besides, a memorandum, written, I rejoiced to see, from beginning to end in Don Felipe's own hand—a deadly document naming some twenty people in San Paulo who would need attention when Juan Pablo had been overthrown. It was impossible to misunderstand the phrase. Those twenty citizens of San Paulo were to be shot out of hand against the nearest wall. I was appalled as I copied it out. There was enough treachery here to convict a regiment. No wonder the great house in the Calle Madrid stood empty! No wonder that Don Felipe— But while I argued, the picture of the daughter in her shining frock, alone amidst the glitter and the silence, smote upon me as pitiful, and struck the heart out of all my argument.

Juan Pablo was at my elbow the moment after I had finished.

"It is five o'clock," he said, as he gathered the letters and copies together, "and no doubt you will want to be on foot early. You can tell her that I sent her father in a special train last night to the frontier. He is no doubt already with his friends in Esmeralda."

"Then the prisons—" I exclaimed.

"A lover's embroideries—nothing more," said Juan Pablo, with a smile. "But it is interesting to know that you are so thoroughly acquainted with the position of affairs." And he took himself off to bed.

His last remark, however, forced me to consider my own position, and reflection showed it to be delicate. On the one hand I was Juan Pablo's servant, on the other I was Harry Vandeleur's friend. I could not side with both, and I must side with one. If I threw in my lot with Juan Pablo, I became a scoundrel. If I helped Olivia, I might lose my bread and butter. I hope that in any case I should have decided as I did, but there was a good deal of virtue in the "might." For, after all, Juan Pablo seemed to recognise that I should be against him and to bear no malice. He had even bidden me relieve Olivia of her fears concerning her father's disappearance. He was a brute, but a brute on rather a grand scale, who took what he wanted but disdained revenge. I decided to help Olivia, and before nine the next morning I knocked upon the door. She opened it herself.

"You have news?" she said, watching me

with anxious eyes, and she stood aside in the shadow of the door while I went in.

"Don Felipe is safe. He was sent to the frontier last night on a special train. He is free."

She had been steel to meet a blow. Now that it did not fall, her strength for a moment failed her. She leaned against a table with her hand to her heart; and her face suddenly told me that she had not slept.

"I will follow him," she said, and she hurried up the stairs. I looked out a train. One left San Paulo in an hour's time. I went out, leaving the door ajar, and fetched a cab. Then I shouted up the stairs to Olivia, and she came down in a travelling dress of light grey and a big black hat. Excitement had kindled her. I could no longer have guessed that she had not slept.

"You will see me off?" she said, as she handed me her bag; and she stepped gaily into the carriage.

"I will," I answered, and I jumped in behind her.

The die was cast now.

"Drive down to the station!" I cried.

It was an open carriage. There were people in the street. Juan Pablo would soon learn that he had played the grand gentleman to his discomfiture.

"Yes, I will see you off, Signorita," I said. "But I shall have a bad half-hour with Juan Pablo afterwards."

"Oh!" cried Olivia, with a start. She looked at me as though for the first time my existence had come within her field of vision.

"I am quite aware that you have never given a thought to me," I said sulkily, "but you need hardly make the fact so painfully obvious."

Olivia's hand fell lightly upon mine and pressed.

"My friend!" she said, and her eyes dwelt softly upon mine. Oh, she knew her business as a woman! Then she looked heavenwards.

"A man who helps a woman in trouble—" she began.

"Yes," I interrupted. "He must look up there for his reward. Meanwhile, Signorita, I am envying Harry Vandeleur," and I waved my hand to the green houses. "For he has not only got you, but he has realised his nice little fortune out of green paint." And all Olivia did was to smile divinely; and all she said was "Harry." But there! She said it adorably, and I shook her by the hand.

"I forgive you," she said sweetly. Yes, she had nerve enough for that!

We were driving down to the lower town. I began to consider how much of the events of the early morning I should tell her. Something of them she must know, but it was not easy for the informant. I told her how Juan Pablo had come to me with letters signed by Don Felipe and a memorandum in his handwriting.

"The President gave them to me to copy out," I continued; and Olivia broke in, rather quickly—

"What did you do with them?"

I stared at her.

"I copied them out, of course."

Olivia stared now. Her brows puckered in a frown.

"You—didn't—destroy them when you had the chance?" she asked incredulously.

I jumped in my seat.

"Destroy them?" I cried indignantly. "Really, Signorita!"

"You are Harry's friend," she said. "I thought men did little things like that for one another."

"Little things!" I gasped. But I recognised that it would be waste of breath to argue against a morality so crude.

"You shall take Harry's opinion upon that point," said I.

"Or perhaps Harry will take mine," she said softly, with a far-away gaze; and the fly stopped at the station. I bought Olivia's ticket, I placed her bag in the carriage, I stepped aside to let her mount the step; and I knocked against a brilliant creature with a sword at his side—he was merely a railway official. I begged his pardon, but he held his ground.

"Signor, you have, no doubt, his Excellency's permit for the Signorita to travel," he said, holding out his hand.

I was fairly staggered, but I did not misunderstand the man. Juan Pablo had foreseen that Olivia would follow her father, and he meant to keep her in San Paulo. I fumbled in my pocket to cover my confusion.

"I must have left it behind," I said lamely. "But of course you know me—his Excellency's secretary."

"Who does not?" said the official, bowing politely. "And there is another train in the afternoon, so that the Signorita will, I hope, not be greatly inconvenienced."

We got out of the station somehow. I was mad with myself. I ought to have known that if Juan Pablo played the grand

gentleman, he would have already taken care that he was not going to lose anything by it. We stumbled back again into a fly. I dared not look at Olivia.

"The Calle Madrid!" I called to the driver, and Olivia cried "No!" She turned to me, with a spot of colour burning in each cheek, and her eyes very steady and ominous.

"Will you tell him to drive to the President's?" she said calmly.

The conventions are fairly strict in Maldivia. Young ladies do not as a rule drop in casually upon men in the morning, and certainly not upon Presidents. However, conventions are for the unharassed. We drove to the President's. A startled messenger took in Olivia's name, and she was instantly admitted. I went to my office, but I left the door ajar. For down the passage outside of it Olivia would come when she had done with Juan Pablo. I waited anxiously for a quarter of an hour. Would she succeed with him? I had no great hopes. Anger so well became her. But as the second quarter drew on, my hopes rose; and when I heard the rustle of her dress, I flung open the door. A messenger was escorting her, and she just shook her head at me.

"What did he say?" I asked in English, and she replied in the same language.

"He asked me again to marry him, and again I refused. He was gentle, but hard. He is the cruellest of men."

"I will see you this afternoon," said I; and she passed on. I determined to have it out with Juan Pablo at the earliest possible moment. And within the hour he gave me the opportunity. For he came into the room and said—

"Carlyon, I have not had my letters this morning."

"No, your Excellency," I replied. I admit that my heart began to beat more quickly than usual. "I took the Signorita Halvera to the station, where we were stopped."

"I thought you would," he said, with a grin. "But it is impossible that the Signorita should leave San Paulo."

"But you can't keep her here!" I cried. "It's—it's——" "Tyrannical" would not do, nor would "autocratic." Neither epithet would sting him. At last I got the right one.

"Your Excellency, it's barbaric!"

Juan Pablo flushed red. I had touched him on the raw. To be a thoroughly civilised person conducting a thoroughly civilised Government over a thoroughly civilised com-

munity—that was his wild, ambitious dream, and in rosy moments he would even flatter himself that his dream was realised.

"It's nothing of the kind," he exclaimed. "Don Felipe is a dangerous person. I was moved by chivalry, the most cultured of virtues, to let him go unpunished. But I am bound, from the necessities of the State, to retain some pledge for his decent behaviour."

The words sounded very fine and politic, but they could not obscure the springs of his conduct. He had first got Harry Vandeleur out of the way; then, and not till then, he had pounced upon Don Felipe. His aim had been to isolate Olivia. There was very little chivalry about the matter.

"Besides," he argued, "if there were any barbarism—and there isn't—the Signorita can put an end to it by a word."

"But she won't say it!" I cried triumphantly. "No, she is already pledged. She won't say it."

Juan Pablo looked at me swiftly with a set and lowering face. No doubt I had gone a step too far with him. But I would not have taken back a word at that moment—no, not for the monopoly of green paint. I awaited my instant dismissal, but he suddenly tilted back his chair and grinned at me like a schoolboy.

"I like a good spirit," he said, "whether it be in the Signorita or in my private secretary."

It was apparent that he did not think much of me as an antagonist.

"Well," I grumbled, "Harry Vandeleur will be back in three weeks, and your Excellency must make your account with him."

"Yes, that's true," said Juan Pablo, and—I don't know what it was in him. It was not a gesture, for he did not move; it was not a smile, for his face did not change. But I was immediately and absolutely certain that it was not true at all. Reflection confirmed me. He had taken so much pains to isolate Olivia that he would not have overlooked Harry Vandeleur's return. Somewhere, on some pretext, at Trinidad, or at our own port here, La Guya, Harry Vandeleur would be stopped. I was sure of it. The net was closing tightly round Olivia. This morning the affair had seemed so simple—a mere matter of a six hours' journey in a train. Now it began to look rather grim. I stole a glance at Juan Pablo. He was still sitting with his chair tilted back and his hands in his pockets, but he was gazing out



of the window, and his face was in repose. I recalled Olivia's phrase: "He is the cruellest of men." Was she right? I wondered. In any case, yes, the affair certainly began to look rather grim.

#### IV.

I WAS not free until five that afternoon. But I was in the Calle Madrid before the quarter after five had struck. Again Olivia herself admitted me. She led the way to her father's study at the back of the house. Though I had hurried to the house, I followed her slowly into the study.

"You are still alone?" I asked.

"An old woman—we once befriended her—will come in secretly for an hour in the morning."

"Secretly?"

"She dare not do otherwise."

I was silent. There was a refinement about Juan Pablo's persecution which was simply devilish. He would not molest her, he left her apparently free. But he kept her in a great, empty house in the middle of the town, without servants, without power to leave, without—oh, much more than I had any idea of at the time. But, even so, I noticed that she had changed since the morning. She had come out from her interview with Juan Pablo holding her head high. Now she stood in front of me twisting her hands, a creature of fear.

"You must escape," I said.

Her great eyes looked anxiously at me from a wan face.

"I must," she said. "Yes, I must." Then came a pause, and with a break in her voice she continued. "He warned me not to try. He said that it would not be pleasant for me if I were caught trying."

"A mere threat," I said contemptuously, "like the prisons." But I did not believe my own words, and my blood ran cold. It would be easy to implicate Olivia in the treachery of her father. And the police in Maldivia are not very gentle in their handling of their prisoners, women or men. Still, that risk must be run.

"The *Ariadne* calls at La Guya in a fortnight," I said. "We must smuggle you out on her."

Olivia stared at me in consternation. She stood like one transfixed.

"A fortnight!" she said. Then she sat down in a chair clasping her hands together. "A fortnight!" she whispered to herself, and as I listened to her, and watched her eyes glancing this way and that like an

animal trapped in a cage, it was borne in on me that since this morning some new thing had happened to frighten the very soul of her. I begged her to tell it me.

"No," she said, rising to her feet. "No doubt I can wait for a fortnight."

"That's right, Signorita," I said. "I will arrange a plan. Meanwhile, where can I hear from you and you from me? It will not do for us to meet too often. Have you friends who will be staunch?"

"I wonder," she said slowly. "Enrique Ximenes and his wife, perhaps."

"We will not strain their friendship very much. But we can meet at their house. You can leave a letter for me there, perhaps, and I one for you."

Enrique Ximenes was a Spanish merchant and a gentleman. So far, I felt sure, we could trust him. There was one other man in San Paulo on whom I could rely, the agent of the steamship company to which the *Ariadne* belonged. I rang him up on the telephone that afternoon and arranged a meeting after dark in a back room of that very inferior hotel in the lower town where for some weeks I had lived upon credit. The agent, a solid man with business interests of his own in Maldivia, listened to my story without a word of interruption. Then he said—

"There are four things I can do for you, and no more. In the first place, I can receive here the Signorita's luggage in small parcels and put it together for her. In the second, I can guarantee that the *Ariadne* shall not put into La Guya until dusk, and shall leave the same night. In the third, I will have every bale of cargo already loaded into her before the passenger train comes alongside from San Paulo. And in the fourth, I will arrange that the *Ariadne* shall put to sea the moment the last of her passengers has crossed the gangway. The rest you must do for yourself."

"Thank you," said I. "That's a great deal."

But the confidence was all in my voice and none of it at all in my heart. I went back to Juan Pablo and tried persuasion with him.

"I have seen the Signorita this afternoon," I said to him.

"I know," said he calmly.

I had personally no longer any fear that he might dismiss me. I would, I think, have thrown up my job myself, but that I seemed to have a better chance of helping the girl by staying on.

"You will never win her," I continued, "your Excellency, by your way of wooing."  
 "Oh, and why not?" he asked.  
 "She thinks you a brute," I said frankly.  
 Juan Pablo reflected.  
 "I don't much mind her thinking that," he answered slowly.

I gave up efforts to persuade him. After all, the brute knew something about women. I was thrown back upon the first plan. Olivia must escape from the country on the *Ariadne*. How to smuggle her unnoticed out of her empty house, down to La Guya, and on board the steamer? That was the



"It is impossible that the Signorita should leave San Paulo."

"She hates you," I went on.  
 "And I don't seriously object to her thinking that," he replied.  
 "She despises you," I said in despair.  
 "Ah!" said Juan Pablo, with a change of voice. "I should object to her doing that. But then it isn't true."

problem; but though I lay awake over it o' nights, and pondered it as I sat at my writing-table, the days crept on and brought me no nearer to a solution.

Meanwhile, the world was going very ill with Olivia. San Paulo, fresh from its war, was aflame with patriotism. The story of

Don Felipe's treachery had gone abroad—Juan Pablo had seen to that—and since his daughter had been his secretary, she too was tarnished. The doors of her friends were closed upon her, with the exception of Enrique Ximenes. If she ventured abroad, she was insulted in the street, and at night a lamp in a window of her house would bring a stone crashing through the pane. Whenever I saw her, I noticed with an aching heart the tension under which she laboured. Her face grew thin, the tone had gone from her voice, the lustre from her eyes, the very gloss from her hair. Sometimes it seemed to me that she must drop into Juan Pablo's net. I raged vainly over my problem. I could have knocked the heads together of the diminutive soldiers at the sides of the President's doorway whenever I went in and out. And then, when I was at my wits' end, a trivial incident suddenly showed me a way out.

I passed down the Calle Madrid one night, and the sight of the big, dark house, with here and there a broken window, brought before my mind so poignant a picture of the girl sitting in some back room alone and in misery, and contrasted that picture so vividly with another made familiar to me by many an evening in San Paulo—that of a girl shining exquisite beyond her peers in the radiance and the clean strength of her youth—that upon returning to my room I took the receiver from the telephone with no other thought than to talk to her for a few moments and encourage her to keep a good heart. I gave the number of her house to the Exchange, and the answer came promptly back.

"The line is out of order."

I might have known that it would be. Olivia was to be marooned in her great town-house as effectively as though she had been set down in a lone island of the southern seas. I hung up the receiver again, and as I hung it up suddenly I saw part of the way clear. I suppose that I had used that telephone a hundred times during the past week. It had stood all day at my elbow. Yet not until to-night had it reminded me of that little matter of the Opera House—one of those cases in which dealings with Juan Pablo had left their mark. I had the answer to a part of the problem which troubled me. I saw a way to smuggle Olivia from San Paulo on board the *Ariadne*. The more I thought upon it, the clearer grew that possibility. But there still remained the other half. There still remained the ques-

tion: How to get Olivia unnoticed from her house in the middle of a busy, narrow street on the night when the *Ariadne* was to sail. The difficulties there brought me to a stop. And I was still revolving the problem in my mind when the private bell rang from Juan Pablo's room. I went to see what he wanted; and I had not been five minutes in his presence before, with a leaping heart, I realised that this question was being answered too.

Juan Pablo had of late been troubled. But not at all about Olivia. As far as she was concerned, he ate his meals, went about his business, and slept o' nights like any good man who has not a girl in torments upon his conscience. But he was troubled about a rumour which was spreading through the town.

"You have heard of it?" he asked of me. "It is said that I am proposing to run away secretly from Maldivia."

I nodded.

"I have laughed at it, of course."

"Yes," said he, with his face in a frown. "But the rumour grows. I doubt if laughter is enough;" and then he banged his fist violently upon the table and cried: "I suppose Don Felipe is at the bottom of it!"

Don Felipe had become something of an obsession to the President. I think he excused to himself his brutality towards Olivia by imagining everywhere Don Felipe's machinations. As a fact, the rumour was spontaneous in San Paulo. It was generally suspected that the President had annexed the war indemnity and any other portions of the revenue which he could without too open a scandal. He was a bachelor. The whole of San Paulo put itself in his place. What else should he do but retire secretly and expeditiously to some country where he could enjoy the fruits of his industry in peace and security? Don Felipe had nothing whatever to do with the story. But I did not contradict Juan Pablo, and he continued—

"It is said that I have taken my passage in the *Ariadne*."

I started, but he was not looking at me.

"I must lay hold upon this rumour," he said, "and strangle it. I have thought of a way. I will give a party here on the evening of the day the *Ariadne* calls at La Guya. I will spend a great deal of money on that party. It will be plain that I have no thought of sailing on the *Ariadne*. I hope it will be plain that I have no thought of sailing at all. For I think everyone in San Paulo," he added with a grim laugh, "knows

me well enough to feel sure that I should not spend a great deal of money on a party if I meant to run away from the place afterwards."

Considering San Paulo impartially, I found the reasoning to be sound. Juan Pablo was not a generous man. He took, but he did not give.

"This is what I propose," he said, and he handed me a paper on which he had jotted down his arrangements. He had his heart set on his "one-eyed Republic" as he called it, that I knew. But I knew too that it must have been a fearful wrench for him to decide upon the lavish expenditure of this entertainment. There was to be dancing in the ballroom, a conjuror where the Cabinet met—that seemed to be a happy touch—supper in a marquee, fairy lights and fireworks in the garden, and buffets everywhere.

"You yourself will see after the invitations," he said, with a grin.

"Certainly, your Excellency," I answered. They would come within the definition of "opportunities."

"But here," he continued, "is a list of those who must be asked"; and it was not until I had the list in my hand that I began to see that here I might find an answer to my question. I looked quickly down the names.

"Yes, she's there," said Juan Pablo; and there she was, as plain as a pikestaff—Olivia Halvera. I was not surprised. Juan Pablo never troubled about such trifles as consistency. He wanted her, so he invited her. Nevertheless, I could have danced a *pas seul*. For though Olivia could hardly slip out of her own house in any guise without detection since she had no visitors, she would have a good chance of escaping from the throng of guests at the President's party. I left Juan Pablo with a greatly lightened heart. I looked at my watch. It was not yet eleven. Full of my idea, nothing would serve me but I must this moment set it in motion. I went downstairs into the Square. Though the night was hot, I had slipped on an overcoat to conceal the noticeable breastplate of a white shirt, and I walked quickly for half a mile until I came opposite to a high and neglected building, a place of darkness and rough shutters. This was the Opera House. Beside the Opera House was a little dwelling. I rang the bell, and the door was opened by a tall, lean gentleman in a frock-coat. For the third time that night good luck had stood my friend.

"Mr. Henry P. Crowninshield," I said, "the world-famous *impresario*, I believe?"

"And you, Mr. Carlyon, are the President's private secretary?" he said coldly.

"Not to-night," said I.

With a grunt Mr. Crowninshield led the way into his parlour and stood with his finger-tips resting on the table and his long body bent over it. Mr. Crowninshield came from New York City, and I did not beat about the bush with him. I told him exactly the story of Olivia and Juan Pablo.

"She is in great trouble," I concluded. "There is something which I do not understand. But it comes to this. She must escape. The railways are watched, so is her house. There is only one way of escape—and that is on the seventeenth, the night when the *Ariadne* calls at La Guya and the President gives his party."

Mr. Crowninshield nodded, and his long body slid with a sort of fluid motion into a chair.

"Go on, sir," he said; "I am interested."

"And I encouraged," said I. "Let us follow the Signorita's proceedings on the night of the seventeenth. She goes dressed in her best to the President's party. She is on view to the last possible moment. She then slips quietly out into the garden. In the garden wall there is a private door, of which I have a key. I let her out by that door. Outside that door there is a closed, inconspicuous carriage waiting for her. She slips into that carriage—and that is where you come in."

"How?" asked Mr. Crowninshield.

"Inside the carriage she finds a disguise—dress, wig, everything complete—a disguise easy to slip on over her ball-gown and sufficient to baffle a detective half a yard away."

"You shall have it, sir! My heart bleeds for that young lady!" cried Mr. Crowninshield, and he grasped my hand in the noblest fashion. He had been a baritone in his day. "Besides," and he descended swiftly to the mere level of a human being, "I have a score against Master Pablo, and I should like to get a little of my own back."

That was precisely the point of view upon which I had counted. Throughout his first term of office Juan Pablo had hired a box at the Opera. Needless to say, he had never paid for it, and Mr. Crowninshield unwisely pressed for payment. When requests failed, Mr. Crowninshield went to threats. He threatened the Law, the American Eagle, and the whole of the United



States Navy. Juan Pablo's reply had been short, sharp, and decisive. The State telephone system was being overhauled. Juan Pablo moved the Exchange to a building on the other side of the Opera House, and then summarily closed the Opera House on the ground that the music prevented the operators from hearing the calls. It was not astonishing that Mr. Crowninshield was eager to help Olivia Halvera. He lit a candle and led me through his private door across the empty theatre, ghostly with its sheeted benches, to the wardrobe-room. We chose a nun's dress, long enough to hide Olivia's gown, and a coif which would conceal her hair and overshadow her face.

"In that her own father wouldn't know her. It will be dark; the Quay is ill-lighted, she has only to shuffle like an old woman; she will go third-class, of course, in the train. Who is to see her off?"

"No one," I answered. "I dread that half-hour in the train for her without a friend at her side. The Quay will be watched, too. She must run the gauntlet alone. Luckily there will be a crowd of harvesters returning to Spain. Luckily, also, she has courage. But it will be the worst of her trials. My absence would be noticed. I can't go."

"No, but I can!" cried Mr. Crowninshield. "An old padre seeing off an old nun to her new mission—eh? Juan Pablo will be gritting his teeth in the morning because I am an American citizen."

Mr. Crowninshield was aflame with his project. He took a stick and tottered about the room in the most comical fashion. "I will bring the fly myself to the garden door," said he. "I will be inside of it. My property man—he comes from Poughkeepsie—shall be the driver. I will dress the young lady as we drive slowly to the station, and Sister Pepita and the Padre Antonio will direct their feeble steps to the darkest corner of the worst-lit carriage in the train."

I thanked him with all my heart. It had seemed to me terrible that Olivia should have to make her way alone on board the steamer. Now she would have someone to enhearten and befriend her. I met Olivia once at the house of Enrique Ximenes, and made her acquainted with the scheme, and on the night of the sixteenth the steamship agent rang me up on the telephone.

"The *Ariadne* will arrive at nine to-morrow night. The passengers will leave San Paulo at half past ten. Good luck!"

I went to the window and looked out over the garden. The marquee was erected, the fairy lights strung upon the trees, a set piece with the portrait of Juan Pablo and a Latin motto—*semper fidelis*—raised its monstrous joinery against the moon. Twenty-four hours more and, if all went well, Olivia would be out upon the high seas, on her way to Trinidad. Surely all must go well. I went over in my mind every detail of our preparations. I recognised only one chance of failure—the chance that Mr. Crowninshield in his exuberance might over-act his part. But I was wrong. It was, after all, Olivia who brought our fine scheme to grief.

## V.

THERE is no doubt about it. Women are not reasonable beings. Otherwise Olivia would never have come to the President's party in a white lace coat over a clinging gown of white satin. She looked beautiful, but I was dismayed when I saw her. She had come with the Ximenes, and I took her aside, and I am afraid that I scolded her.

"But you told me," she expostulated, "I was to spare no pains. There must be nothing of the traveller about me;" and there was not. From the heels of her satin slippers to the topmost tress of her hair she was dressed as she alone could dress in San Paulo.

"But of course I meant you to wear black," I whispered.

"Oh, I didn't think of it," Olivia exclaimed wearily. "Please don't lecture;" and she dropped into a chair with such a lassitude upon her face that I thought she was going to faint.

"It doesn't matter," I said hastily. "No doubt the disguise will cover it. At ten o'clock, slip down into the garden. Until then, dance!"

"Dance!" she exclaimed, looking piteously up into my face.

"Yes," I insisted impatiently, and taking her hand, I raised her from her chair.

She had no lack of partners, for the President himself singled her out and danced in a quadrille with her. Others timorously followed his example. But though she did dance, I was grievously disappointed—for a time. It seemed that her soul was flickering out in her. Just when she most needed her courage and her splendid spirit, she failed of them.

There were only two more hours after a long fortnight of endurance. Yet those two last hours, it seemed, she could not face. I

know now that I never acted with greater cruelty than on that night when I kept her dancing. But even while she danced, there came to me some fear that I had misjudged her. I watched her from a corner of the ballroom. There was a great change in her. Her face seemed to me smaller, her eyes bigger, darker even, and luminous with some haunting look. But there was more. I could not define the change—at first. Then the word came to me. There was a spirituality in her aspect which was new to her, an unearthliness. Surely, I thought, the fruit of great suffering; and blundering, with the truth under my very nose, I began to ask myself a foolish question. Had Harry Vandeleur played her false?

A movement of the company awakened me. A premonitory sputter of rockets drew the guests to the cloak-room, from the cloak-room to the garden. I saw Olivia fetch her lace coat and slip it over her shoulders like the rest. It was close upon ten. The Fates were favouring us, or perhaps I was favouring the Fates. For I had arranged that the fireworks should begin just a few minutes before the hour struck. In the darkness of the garden Olivia could slip away, and her absence would not afterwards be noticed.

I waited at the garden door. I heard the clock strike. I saw Juan Pablo's profile in fire against a dark blue sky of velvet and stars. I shook hands with myself in that the moon would not rise till one. And then a whiteness gleamed between the bushes, and Olivia was at my side. Her hand sought mine and clung to it. I opened the postern and looked out into a little street. The lamps of a closed fly shone twenty yards away, and but for the fly the street was empty.

"Now!" I whispered.

We ran out. I opened the carriage door. I caught a glimpse of horn spectacles, a lantern-jawed, unshaven face, a shovel hat; and I heard a stifled oath. Mr. Crowninshield, too, had noticed Olivia's white gown. She jumped in, I shut the door, and the carriage rolled away. I went back into the garden, where Juan Pablo's profile was growing ragged.

Of the next hour or two I have only confused memories. I counted stages in Olivia's progress as I passed from room to room among the guests. Now she would have reached the station; now the train had stopped on the quay at La Guya; now, perhaps, the gangway had been withdrawn and the great ship was warping out into the river. At one o'clock I smoked a cigarette

in the garden. From the marquee came the clatter of supper. In the sky the moon was rising. And somewhere outside the three-mile limit a rippling path of silver struck across the *Ariadne's* dark bows. I was conscious of a swift exultation. I heard the throb of the screw and saw the water flashing from the ship's sides.

Then I remembered that I had left the garden door unlocked. I went to it and by chance looked out into the street. I received a shock. For, twenty yards away, the lights of a closed carriage shone quietly beside the kerb. I wondered whether the last few hours had been really the dream of a second. I even looked back into the garden, to make sure that the profile of Juan Pablo was not still sputtering in fire. Then a detail or two brought me relief. The carriage was clearly a private carriage, not a fly; the driver on the box wore livery—at all events, I saw a flash of bright buttons on his coat. In my relief I walked from the garden towards the carriage. The driver recognised me most likely—recognised, at all events, that I came from the private door of the President's garden. For he made some kind of salute.

I supposed that he had been told to wait at this spot, away from the park of carriages, and I should have turned back but for a circumstance which struck me as singular. It was a very hot night, and yet not only were the windows of the carriage shut, but the blinds were drawn close besides. I could not see into the carriage, but there was light at the edges of the blinds. A lamp was burning inside. I stood on the pavement, and a chill struck into my blood and made me shiver. I listened. There was no sound of any movement within the carriage. It must be empty. I assured myself and again doubted. The little empty street, the closed carriage with the light upon the edges of the blinds, the absolute quiet, daunted me. I stepped forward and gently opened the door. I saw Olivia. There was no trace of the nun's gown, nor the coif. But that her hair was ruffled she might this moment have left Juan Pablo's drawing-room.

She turned her face to me, shook her head, and smiled.

"It was of no use, my friend," she said gently. "They were on the watch at La Guya. An officer brought me back. He has gone in to ask Juan Pablo what he shall do with me."

Olivia had given up the struggle—that was clear.

"It was Crowninshield's fault!" I cried.

"No, it was mine," she answered.

And here is what had happened, as I learnt it afterwards. All had gone well until the train reached La Guya. There the police were on the look-out for her. The Padre Antonio, however, excited no suspicion, and very likely Sister Pepita would have passed unnoticed too. But as she stepped down from the carriage on to the step, and from the step to the ground, an officer was startled by the unexpected appearance of a small foot in a white silk stocking and a white satin slipper. Now, the officer had seen nuns before, old and young, but never had he seen one in white satin shoes, to say nothing of the silk stockings. He became more than curious. He pointed her out to his companions. Sister Pepita was deftly separated in the crowd from the Padre Antonio—cut out, to borrow the old nautical phrase—and arrested. She was conducted towards a room in the station, but the steamer's siren hooted its warning to the passengers, and despair seized upon Olivia. She made a rush for the gangway, she was seized, she was carried forcibly into the room and stripped of her nun's disguise and coif. She was kept a prisoner in the room until the *Ariadne* had left the quay. Then she was placed in a carriage and driven back, with an officer of the police at her side, to the garden door of the President's house.

Something of this Olivia told me at the time, but she was interrupted by the return of the officer and a couple of Juan Pablo's messengers.

"His Excellency will see you," said the officer to her. He conducted her through the garden and by the private doorway into Juan Pablo's study. I had followed behind the servants and I remained in the room. We waited for a few minutes, and Juan Pablo came in. He went quickly over to Olivia's side. His voice was all gentleness. But that was his way with her, and I set no hopes on it.

"I am grieved, Signorita, if you have suffered rougher treatment than befits you. But you should not have tried to escape."

Olivia looked at him with a piteous helplessness in her eyes. "What am I to do, then?" she seemed to ask, and, with the question, to lose the last clutch upon her spirit. For her features quivered, she dropped into a chair, laid her arms upon the table, and, burying her face in them, burst into tears.

It was uncomfortable—even for Juan Pablo. There came a look of trouble in his

face, a shadow of compunction. For myself, the heaving of her young shoulders hurt my eyes, the sound of her young voice breaking in sobs tortured my ears. But this was not the worst of it, for she suddenly threw herself back in her chair with the tears wet upon her cheeks, and, beating the table piteously with the palms of her hands, she cried—

"I am hungry—oh, so hungry!"

"Good Heavens!" cried Juan Pablo. He started forward, staring into her face.

"But you knew," said Olivia, and he turned away to one of the messengers, and bade him bring some supper into the room.

"And be quick," said I.

"Yes, yes, be quick," said Juan Pablo.

At last I had the key to her. She had been starving, in that great, empty house in the Calle Madrid. "A fortnight!" she had cried in dismay. I understood now the reason of her terror. She had known that she would have to starve. And she had held her head high, making no complaint, patiently enduring. It was not her spirit which had failed her. I cursed myself for a fool as once more I enthroned her. Her face had grown smaller, her eyes bigger. There was a look of spirituality which I had not seen before. I had noticed the signs, and I had misread them. Her lassitude this evening, her vain struggle with the police, her apathy under their treatment of her, were all explained. Not her courage, but her body had failed her. She was starving.

A tray was brought in and placed before her. She dried her eyes and with a sigh she drew her chair in to the table and ate, indifferent to the presence of Juan Pablo, of the officer who remained at the door, and of myself. Juan Pablo stood and watched her. "Good Heavens!" he said again softly, and going to her side he filled her glass with champagne.

She nodded her thanks and raised it to her lips almost before he had finished pouring. A little colour came into her cheeks and she turned again to her supper. She was a healthy girl. There never had been anything of the drooping lily about Olivia. She had always taken an interest in her meals, however dainty she might look. The knowledge of that made her starvation doubly cruel—not only to her. Juan Pablo sat down opposite to her. There was no doubt now about the remorse in his face. He never took his eyes from her as she ate. Once she looked up and saw him watching her.

"But you knew," she said. "I was alone in the house. How much money did you



"She nodded her thanks and raised it to her lips."

leave there for me when you took my father away? A few dollars which your men had not discovered."

"But you yourself——" he stammered.

"I was at a ball," said Olivia scornfully. "How much money does a girl take with her to a ball? Where would she put it?"

There was no answer to that question.

"The next day I went to the bank," she continued. "My father's money was im-

pounded. You had seen to that. All the unpaid bills came in in a stream. I couldn't pay them. I could get no credit. You had seen to that. My friends left me alone. Of course I starved; you knew that I should. You meant me to," and, with the air of one who has been wasting time, she turned again to her supper.

"I never thought that you would hold out," stammered Juan Pablo. I had never



seen him in an apologetic mood before, and he looked miserable. "I hadn't *seen* that you were starving."

Olivia looked up at him. It was not so much that her face relented, as that it showed an interest in something beyond her supper.

"Yes," she said, nodding at him. "I think that's true. You hadn't seen with your own eyes that I was starving. So my starving wasn't very real to you."

Juan Pablo changed her plate and filled her glass again.

"Ah!" said Olivia with satisfaction, hitching up her chair still closer. She was really having a good square meal.

"But why didn't you tell me?" I asked.

"I told no one," said Olivia, shaking her head. "I thought that I could manage till to-night. Once or twice I called on the Ximenes at luncheon-time, and I had one or two dollars. No; I would tell no one."

"Yes," said Juan Pablo, "I understand that. It's the reason why I wanted you." And at this sign of his comprehension of her, Olivia again looked at him, and again the interest in her eyes was evident.

At last she pushed back her chair. The tray was removed. Juan Pablo offered her a cigarette. She smiled faintly as she took it. Certainly her supper had done her a world of good. She lit her cigarette and leaned her elbows on the table.

"And now," she said, "what do you mean to do with me?"

Juan Pablo went to his bureau, wrote on a sheet of paper and brought the paper to Olivia.

"You can show this at the railway station to-morrow," he said, and he laid the permit on the table and turned away.

Women are not reasonable people. For the second time that night Olivia forced me to contemplate that trite reflection. For now that she had got what she had suffered hunger and indignities to get, she merely played with it with the tips of her fingers, looking now upon the table, now at Juan Pablo's back, and now upon the table again.

"And you?" she said gently. "What will become of you?"

I suppose Juan Pablo was the only one in the room who did not notice the softness of her voice. To me it was extraordinary. He had tortured her with hunger, exposed her to the gentle methods of his police, yet the fact that he did these things because he wanted her seemed to make him suddenly valuable to her now that she was free of him.

Juan Pablo turned round and leaned against the wall with his hands in his pockets.

"I?" he said. "I shall just stay on alone here until some day someone gets stronger than I am, perhaps, and puts me up against the wall outside——"

"Oh, no!" cried Olivia, interrupting him.

"Well, one never knows," said his Excellency, shrugging his shoulders. He turned to the window and drew aside the curtains. The morning had come. It was broad daylight outside.

"You had better get the Signorita a carriage," he said to the officer at the door. As the man went out, the music from the ballroom floated in. Juan Pablo hesitated, and no shock which Olivia had given to me came near the shock which his next words produced.

"Don Felipe shall have his money. You can draw on it, Signorita, to-morrow, before you go."

"Thank you," she said.

The messenger reappeared. A carriage was waiting. Olivia rose and looked at Juan Pablo timidly. He walked ceremoniously to the door and held it open.

"Good night," she said.

He bowed and smiled in a friendly fashion enough, but he did not answer. It seemed that he had spoken his last word to her. She hesitated and went out. At once the President took a quick step towards me.

"Do you know what is said to-night?" he said violently.

I drew back. I could not think what he meant. To tell the truth, I found him rather alarming.

"No," I answered.

"Why, that I have given this party as a farewell; that I am still going to bolt from Maldivia. Do you see? I have spent all this money for nothing."

I drew a breath of relief. His violence was not aimed against me.

"That's a pity," I said. "But the rumour can still be killed. I thought of a way yesterday."

"Will it cost much?" he asked.

"Very little."

"What am I to do?"

"Paint the Presidential House," said I. "It wants it badly, and all San Paulo will be very sure that you wouldn't spend money in paint if you meant to run away."

"That's a good idea," said he, and he sat down at once and began to figure out the expense. "A couple of hundred dollars will do it."

"Not well," said I.

"We don't want it done well," said Juan

Pablo. "Two men on a plank will be enough. A couple of hundred dollars is too much. Half that will be quite sufficient. By the way"—and he sat with his pen poised—"just run after—her—and tell her that Vandeleur is landing to-morrow at Trinidad. I invented some business for him there."

He bent down over the desk. His back was towards the door. As I turned the handle, someone was opening it from the other side. It was Olivia Halvera.

"I came back," she said, with the colour mantling in her face. "You see, I am going away to-morrow—and I hadn't said 'Good-bye.'"

Juan Pablo must have heard her voice.

"Please go and give that message," he said sharply. "And shut the door! I don't want to be disturbed."

Olivia drew back quickly. I was amazed to see that she was hurt.

"His message is for you," I said severely. "Harry Vandeleur lands at Trinidad to-morrow."

"Thank you," she said slowly; she turned away and walked as slowly down the passage. "Good-bye," she said, with her back towards me.

"I will see you off to-morrow, Signorita," I said; and she turned back to me.

"No," she said gently. "Don't do that! We will say 'Good-bye' here."

She gave me her hand—she had been on

the point of going without even doing that. "Thank you very much," she added, and she walked rather listlessly away. She left me with an uneasy impression that her thanks were not very sincere. I am bound to admit that Olivia puzzled me that night. But as I watched her go, I thought that I would keep my bewilderment to myself. I have never asked Harry Vandeleur, for instance, whether he could explain it. I went back to the study.

"I think fifty dollars will be ample," said Juan Pablo, still figuring on his paper. "Has she gone?"

"She is going," said I. He rose from his chair, broke off a rose from a bowl of flowers which, on this night only, decorated the room. Then he opened the window and leaned out. Olivia, I reckoned, would be just at this moment stepping into the carriage. He tossed the rose down and drew back quickly out of sight.

"Shall it be green paint, your Excellency?" I asked.

His Excellency, I regret to say, swore loudly.

"Never in this world!" said he.

I had left the door open. The music of a languorous and melting waltz filled the room.

"I do loathe music!" cried Juan Pablo violently. It was the nearest approach to a sentimental remark that I had ever heard him make.

## THE MOSS, THE MERRY GREEN IVY.

**T**HE moss, the merry green ivy,  
That trail from tree to tree,  
The crimson-berried holly,  
They are a pretty three!  
They light the grey world's gloom this night  
For travellers all to see!  
'Tis for the wandering children  
Of heaven, the ivy grows;  
The birds shall find their rest therein  
Whenas the daylight goes;  
The tree of God makes barren road  
To blossom as the rose!

'Twas with a leaf of ivy  
The dove flew o'er the Flood;\*  
And still she seeks her refuge  
Within her ark, the wood;  
When ways grow dark and the hollies' spark  
Leads her as lanthorn should.  
The moss, the merry green ivy,  
That trail from tree to tree,  
The crimson-berried holly,  
They are a pretty three!  
They light the whole world's gloom this night  
For travellers all to see!

Earth's wanderers, shelter seeking,  
May we find happy rest,  
As calm as our dear Saviour—  
A Babe on Mary's breast;  
While the holly shines and the ivy twines,  
This night—of all the best!

\* Gipsy legend.

ALICE E. GILLINGTON.

# AN OLD-WORLD EPISODE.

By WILLIAM J. LOCKE.



HAVE often thought of editing the diary (which is in my possession) of one Jeremy Wendover, of Bullingford, in the county of Berkshire, England, Gent., who departed this life in the year of grace 1758, and

of giving to the world a document as human as the record of Pepys and as deeply imbued with the piety of a devout Christian as the Confessions of Saint Augustine. A little emendation of an occasionally ungrammatical and disjointed text—though in the main the diary is written in the scholarly, florid style of the eighteenth century—a little intelligent conjecture as to certain dates, a footnote now and then elucidating an obscure reference, and the thing would be done. It has been a great temptation; but I have resisted it. The truth is that to the casual reader the human side would seem to be so meagre, the pietistic so full. One has to seek so carefully for a few flowers of fact among a wilderness of religious and philosophical fancy—nay, more, to be so much in sympathy with the diarist as to translate the pious rhetoric into terms of mundane incident—that only to the curious student can the real life history of the man be revealed. And who in these hurrying days would give weeks of patient toil to a task so barren of immediate profit? I myself certainly would not do it; and it is a good working philosophy of life (though it has its drawbacks) not to expect others to do what you would not do yourself. It is only because the study of these yellow pages, covered with the brown, almost microscopic, pointed handwriting, has amused the odd moments of years, that I have arrived at something like a comprehension of the things that mattered so much to Jeremy Wendover, and so pathetically little to any other of the sons and daughters of Adam.

How did the diary, you ask, come into my possession? I picked it up, years ago, for a franc, at a second-hand bookseller's in

Geneva. It has the book-plate of a long-forgotten Bishop of Sodor and Man, and an inscription on the flyleaf: "John Henderson, Calcutta, 1835." How it came into the hands of the Bishop, into those of John Henderson, how it passed thence and eventually found its way to Geneva, Heaven alone knows.

I have said that Jeremy Wendover departed this life in 1758. My authority for the statement is a lichen-covered gravestone in the churchyard of Bullingford, whither I have made many pious pilgrimages, in the hope of finding more records of my obscure hero. But I have been unsuccessful. The house, however, in which he lived, described at some length in his diary, is still standing—an early Tudor building, the residence of the maltster who owned the adjoining long, gabled malthouse, and from whom he rented it for a considerable term of years. It is situate on the river fringe of the little town, at the end of a lane running at right angles to the main street just before this loses itself in the Market Square. I have stood at the front gate of the house and watched the Thames, some thirty yards away, flow between its alder-grown banks; the wide, lush meadows and cornfields beyond dotted here and there with the red roofs of farms, and spreading amid the quiet greenery of oaks and chestnuts to the low-lying Oxfordshire hills; I have breathed in the peace of the evening air, and I have found myself very near in spirit to Jeremy Wendover, who stood, as he notes, many and many a summer afternoon at that self-same gate, watching the self-same scene, far away from the fever and the fret of life.

I have thought, therefore, that instead of publishing his diary, I might, with some degree of sympathy, set forth in brief the one dramatic episode in his inglorious career.

## II.

THE overwhelming factor in Jeremy Wendover's life was the appalling, inconceivable hideousness of his face. The refined, cultivated, pious gentleman was cursed with a visage which it would have pleased Dante to ascribe to a White Guelph whom

he particularly disliked, and would have made Orcagna shudder in the midst of his dreams of shapes of hell. As a child of six, in a successful effort to rescue a baby sister, he had fallen head foremost into a great wood fire, and when they picked him up his face "was like unto a charred log that had long smouldered." Almost the semblance of humanity had been wiped from him, and to all beholders he became a thing of horror. Men turned their heads away, women shivered, and children screamed at his approach. He was a pariah, condemned from early boyhood to an awful loneliness. His parents, a certain Sir Julius Wendover, Baronet, and his wife, his elder brother and his sisters—they must have been a compassionless family—turned from him as from an evil and pestilential thing. Love never touched him with its consoling feather, and for love the poor wretch pined his whole youth long. Human companionship even was denied him. He seems to have lived alone in a wing of the great house, seldom straying beyond the bounds of the park, under the tutorship of a reverend but scholarly sot who was too drunken and obese and unbuttoned to be admitted into the family circle. This fellow, one Dr. Tubbs, of St. Catherine's College, Cambridge, seems to have shown Jeremy some semblance of affection; but chiefly while in his cups, "when," as Jeremy puts it bitterly, "he was too much like unto the beasts that perish to distinguish between me and a human being." When sober he railed at the boy for a monster, and frequently chastised him for his lack of beauty. But in some strange way, in alternate fits of slobbering and castigating, he managed to lay the groundwork of a fine education, teaching Jeremy the classics, Italian and French, some mathematics, and the elements of philosophy and theology; he also discoursed much to him on the great world of which, till his misfortunes came upon him, he boasted of having been a distinguished ornament; and when he had three bottles of wine inside him, he told his charge very curious and instructive things indeed.

So Jeremy grew to man's estate, sensitive, shy, living in the world of books, and knowing little, save at second-hand, of the ways of men and women. But with all the secrets of the birds and beasts in the far-stretching Warwickshire park he was intimately acquainted. He became part of the woodland life. Squirrels would come to him and munch their acorns on his shoulder. "So

intimate was I in this innocent community," says he, not without quiet humour, "that I have been a wet-nurse to weasels and called in as physician to a family of moles."

When Sir Julius died, Jeremy received his younger son's portion (fortunately it was a goodly one) and was turned neck and crop out of the house by his ill-conditioned brother. Tubbs, having also suffered ignominious expulsion, persuaded him to go on the grand tour. They started. But they only got as far as Abbeville on the road to Paris, where Tubbs was struck down by an apoplexy of which he died. Up to that point the sot's company had enabled Jeremy to endure the insult, ribaldry and terror that attended his unspeakable deformity; but left alone, he lost heart; mankind rejected him as a pack of wolves reject a maimed cub. Stricken with shame and humiliation, he crept back to England, and established himself in the maltster's house at Bullingford, guided thither by no other consideration than that it had been the birthplace of the dissolute Tubbs. He took up his lonely abode there as a boy of three-and-twenty, and there he spent the long remainder of his life.

### III.

THE Great Event happened in his thirty-fourth year.

You may picture him as a solitary, scholarly figure, living in the little Tudor house, with its mullioned windows, set in the midst of an old-world garden bright with stocks and phlox and hollyhocks and great pink roses, its southern wall generously glowing with purple plums. Indoors, the house was somewhat dark. The casement window of the main living-room was small and overshadowed by the heavy ivy outside. The furniture, of plain dark oak, mainly consisted of book-cases, in which were ranged the solemn, leather-covered volumes that were Jeremy's world. A great table in front of the window contained the books of the moment, the latest news-sheets from London, and the great brass-clasped volume in which he wrote his diary. In front of it stood a great straight-backed chair.

You may picture him, on a late August afternoon, sitting in this chair, writing his diary by the fading light. His wig lay on the table, for the weather was close. He paused, pen in hand, and looked wistfully at the mellow eastern sky, lost in thought. Then he wrote these words:—

*"O Lord Jesus, fill me plentifully with Thy love, which passeth the love of woman ;*



“‘Why, surely, madam,’ said he, pointing with his stick,”

*for love of woman never will be mine, and therefore, O Lord, I require Thy love bountifully; I yearn for love even as a weaned child. Even as a weaned child yearns for the breast of its mother, so yearn I for love.”*

He closed and clasped the book with a sigh, put on his wig, rose, and going into the tiny hall, opened the kitchen door and announced to his household—one ancient and incompetent crone—his intention of taking the air. Then he clapped on his old three-cornered hat and, stick in hand, went out of the front gate into the light of the sunset. He stood for a while watching the deep reflections of the alders and willows in the river and the golden peace of the meadows beyond, and his heart was uplifted in thank-

fulness for the beauty of the earth. He was a tall, thin man, with the stoop of the scholar, and, despite his rough, country-made clothes, the unmistakable air of the eighteenth-century gentleman. The setting sun shone full on the piteous medley of marred features that served him for a face.

A woman, sickle on arm, leading a toddling child, passed by with averted head. But she curtsied and said respectfully: “Good evening, your honour.” The child looked at him, and, with a cry of fear, shrank into the mother’s skirts. Jeremy touched his hat.

“Good evening, Mrs. Blackacre. I trust your husband is recovered of his fever.”

“Thanks to your honour’s kindness,” said the woman, her eyes always turned from



him, "he is well-nigh recovered. For shame of yourself!" she added, shaking the child.

"Nay, nay," said Jeremy kindly. "'Tis not the urchin's fault that he met a bogey in broad daylight."

He strolled along the river bank, pleased at his encounter. In that little backwater of the world where he had lived secluded for ten years, folks had learned to suffer him—nay, more, to respect him; and though they seldom looked him in the face, their words were gentle and friendly. He could even jest at his own misfortune.

"God is good," he murmured, as he walked with head bent down and hands behind his back, "and the earth is full of His goodness. Yet if He in His mercy could only give me a companion in my loneliness, as He gives to every peasant, bird, and beast——"

A sigh ended the sentence. He was young, and not always able to control the squabble between sex and piety. The words had scarcely passed his lips, however, when he discerned a female figure seated on the bank some hundred yards away. His first impulse—an impulse which the habit of years would, on ordinary occasions, have rendered imperative—was to make a wide detour round the meadows; but this evening the spirit of mild revolt took possession of him and guided his steps in the direction of the lady—for lady he perceived her to be when he drew a little nearer.

She wore a flowered muslin dress cut open at the neck, and her arms, bare to the elbows, were white and shapely. A peach-blossom of a face appeared below the mob-cap bound by a cherry-coloured ribbon, and as Jeremy came within speaking distance, her dark blue eyes were fixed on him fearlessly. Jeremy halted and looked at her, while she looked at Jeremy. His heart beat wildly. The miracle of miracles had happened—the hopeless, impossible thing that he had prayed for in rebellious hours for so many years, ever since he had realised that the world held such a thing as the joy and the blessing of woman's love. A girl looked at him smilingly, frankly in the face, without a quiver of repulsion—and a girl more dainty and beautiful than any he had seen before. Then, as he stared, transfixed like a person in a beatitude, into her eyes, something magical occurred to Jeremy. The air was filled with the sound of fairy harps, of which his own tingling nerves from head to foot were the vibrating strings. Jeremy fell instantaneously in love.

"Will you tell me, sir," she said in a musical voice (the music of the spheres to

Jeremy), "will you tell me how I can reach the house of Mistress Wotherspoon?"

Jeremy took off his three-cornered hat and made a sweeping bow.

"Why, surely, madam," said he, pointing with his stick, "'tis yonder red roof peeping through the trees only three hundred yards distant."

"You are a gentleman," said the girl quickly.

"My name is Jeremy Wendover, younger son of the late Sir Julius Wendover, Baronet, and now and always, madam, your very humble servant."

She smiled. Her rosy lips and pearly teeth—Jeremy's own description—filled Jeremy's head with lunatic imaginings.

"And I, sir," said she, "am Mistress Barbara Seaforth, and I came but yesterday to stay with my aunt, Mistress Wotherspoon. If I could trespass so far on your courtesy as to pray you to conduct me thither, I should be vastly beholden to you."

His sudden delight at the proposition was mingled with some astonishment. She only had to walk across the meadow to the clump of trees. He assisted her to rise, and, with elaborate politeness, offered his arm. She made no motion, however, to take it.

"I thought I was walking in my aunt's little railed enclosure," she remarked, "but I must have passed through the gate into the open fields; and when I came to the river I was frightened, and sat down and waited for someone to pass."

"Pray pardon me, madam," said Jeremy, "but I don't quite understand——"

"La, sir, how very thoughtless of me!" she laughed. "I never told you. I am blind."

"Blind!" he echoed. The leaden weight of a piteous dismay fell upon him. That was why she had gazed at him so fearlessly. She had not seen him. The miracle had not happened. For a moment he lost count of the girl's sad affliction in the stress of his own bitterness. But the lifelong habit of resignation prevailed.

"Madam, I crave your pardon for not having noticed it," he said in an unsteady voice; "and I admire the fortitude wherewith you bear so grievous a burden."

"Just because I can't see is no reason for my drowning the world in my tears. We must make the best of things. And there are compensations, too," she added lightly, allowing her hand to be placed on his arm and led away. "I refer to an adventure with a young gentleman which, were I not

blind, my Aunt Wotherspoon would esteem mightily unbecoming."

"Alas, madam," said he with a sigh, "there you are wrong. I am not young. I am thirty-three."

He thought it was a great age. Mistress Barbara turned up her face saucily and laughed. Evidently she did not share his opinion. Jeremy bent a wistful gaze into the beautiful, sightless eyes, and then saw, what had hitherto escaped his notice, a thin, grey film over the pupils.

"How did you know," he asked, "that I was a man when I came up to you?"

"First by your aged, tottering footsteps, sir," she said with a pretty air of mockery, "which were not those of a young girl. And then you were standing 'twixt me and the sun, and one of my poor eyes can still distinguish light from shadow."

"How long have you suffered from this great affliction?" he asked.

"I have been going blind for two years. It is now two months since I have lost sight altogether. But please don't talk of it," she added hastily. "If you pity me, I shall cry, which I hate, for I want to laugh as much as I can. I can also walk faster, sir, if it would not tire your aged limbs."

Jeremy started guiltily. She had divined his evil purpose. But who will blame him for not wishing to relinquish over-soon the delicious pressure of her little hand on his arm, and to give over this blind flower of womanhood into another's charge? He replied disingenuously, without quickening his pace—

"'Tis for your sake, madam, I am walking slowly. The afternoon is warm."

"I am vastly sensible of your gallantry, sir," she retorted. "But I fear you must have practised it much on others to have arrived at this perfection."

"By Heavens, madam," he cried, cut to the heart by her innocent raillery, "'tis not so! Could you but see me, you would know it was not. I am a recluse, a student, a poor creature set apart from the ways of men. You are the first woman that has walked arm in arm with me in all my life—except in dreams. And now my dream has come true."

His voice vibrated, and, when she answered, hers was responsive.

"You, too, have your burden?"

"Could you but know how your touch lightens it!" said he.

She blushed to the brown hair that was visible beneath the mob-cap.

"Are we very far now from my Aunt Wotherspoon's?" she asked. Whereupon Jeremy, abashed, took refuge in the commonplace.

The open gate through which she had strayed was reached all too quickly. When she had passed through, she made him a curtsy and held out her hand. He touched it with his lips as if it were sacramental bread. She avowed herself much beholden to his kindness.

"Shall I ever see you again, Mistress Barbara?" he asked, in a low voice, for an old servant was hobbling down from the house to meet her.

"My Aunt Wotherspoon is bedridden, and receives no visitors."

"But could I be of no further service to you?" pleaded Jeremy.

She hesitated, and then she said demurely—

"It would be a humane action, sir, to see sometimes that this gate is shut, lest I stray through it again and drown myself in the river."

Jeremy could scarce believe his ears.

#### IV.

THIS was the beginning of Jeremy's love-story. He guarded the gate like Cerberus or Saint Peter. Sometimes at dawn he would creep out of his house and tramp through the dew-filled meadows to see that it was safely shut. During the day he would do sentry-go within sight of the sacred portal, and when the flutter of a mob-cap and a flowered muslin met his eye, he would advance merely to report that the owner ran no danger. And then, one day, she bade him open it, and she came forth and they walked arm in arm in the meadows; and this grew to be a daily custom, to the no small scandal of the neighbourhood. Very soon Jeremy learned her simple history. She was an orphan, with a small competence of her own. Till recently she had lived in Somersetshire with her guardian; but now he was dead, and the only home she could turn to was that of her bedridden Aunt Wotherspoon, her sole surviving relative.

Jeremy, with a lamentable lack of universality, thanked God on his knees for His great mercy. If Mistress Wotherspoon had not been confined to her bed, she would not have allowed her niece to wander at will with a notorious scarecrow over the Bullingford meadows, and if Barbara had not been blind she could not have walked happily in his company and hung trustfully on his arm. For days she was but a wonder and a



"Mr. Hattaway sprang to assist her, and, unknown to her, took the opportunity of scrutinising her eyes."

wild desire. Her beauty, her laughter, her wit, her simplicity, her bravery, bewildered him. It was enough to hear the music of her voice, to feel the fragrance of her presence, to thrill at her light touch. He, Jeremy Wendover, from whose distortion all human beings, his life long, had turned shuddering away, to have this ineffable companionship! It transcended thought.

At last—it was one night, as he lay awake remembering how they had walked that afternoon, not arm in arm, but hand in hand—the amazing, dazzling glory of a possibility enveloped him. She was blind. She could never see his deformity. Had God listened to his prayer and delivered this fair and beloved woman into his keeping? He shivered all night long in an ecstasy of

happiness, rose at dawn, and mounted guard at Barbara's gate. But as he waited, foodless, for the thrilling sight of her, depression came and sat heavily on his shoulders, until he felt that in daring to think of her in the way of marriage he was committing an abominable crime.

When she came, fresh as the morning, bareheaded, her beautiful hair done up in a club behind, into the little field, and he tried to call to her, his tongue was dry and he could utter no sound. Accidentally he dropped his stick, which clattered down the bars of the gate. She laughed. He entered the enclosure.

"I knew I should find you there," she cried, and sped towards him.

"How did you know?" he asked.

"By the pricking of my thumbs," she quoted gaily, and then, as he took both her outstretched hands, she drew near him and whispered, "and by the beating of my heart."

His arms folded around her, and he held her tight against him, stupefied, dazed, throbbing, vainly trying to find words. At last he said huskily—

"God has sent you to be the joy and comfort of a sorely stricken man. I accept it because it is His will. I will cherish you as no man has ever cherished woman before. My love for you, my dear, is as infinite—as infinite—oh, God!"

Speech failed him. He tore his arms away from her, and fell sobbing at her feet, and kissed the skirts of her gown.

## V.

THE Divine Mercy, as Jeremy puts it, thought fit to remove Aunt Wotherspoon to a happier world before the week was out; and so, within a month, Jeremy led his blind bride into the little Tudor house. And then began for him a happiness so exquisite that sometimes he was afraid to breathe lest he should disturb the enchanted air. Every germ of love and tenderness that had lain undeveloped in his nature sprang into flower. Sometimes he grew afraid lest, in loving her, he was forgetting God. But he reassured himself by a pretty sophistry. "O Lord," says he, "it is Thee only that I worship—through Thine own great gift." And indeed what more could be desired by a reasonable Deity?

Barbara, responsive, gave him her love in full. From the first she would hear nothing of his maimed visage.

"My dear," she said, as they wandered

one golden autumn day by the riverside, "I have made a picture of you out of your voice, the splash of water, the sunset and the summer air. 'Twas thus that my heart saw you the first evening we met. And that is more than sufficing for a poor blind creature whom a gallant gentleman married out of charity."

"Charity!" His voice rose in indignant repudiation.

She laughed and laid her head on his shoulder.

"Ah, dear, I did but jest. I know you fell in love with my pretty doll's face. And also with a little mocking spirit of my own."

"But what made you fall in love with me?"

"Faith, Mr. Wendover," she replied, "a woman with eyes in her head has but to go whither she is driven. And so much the more a blind female like me. You led me plump into the middle of the morass, and there I floundered; and when you came and rescued me, I was silly enough to be grateful."

Under Jeremy's great love her rich nature expanded day by day. She set her joyous courage and her wit to work to laugh at blindness, and to make her the practical, serviceable housewife as well as the gay companion. The ancient crone was replaced by a brisk servant and a gardener, and Jeremy enjoyed creature comforts undreamed of. And the months sped happily by. Autumn darkened into winter and winter cleared into spring, and daffodils and crocuses and primroses began to show themselves in corners of the old-world garden, and tiny gossamer garments in corners of the dark old house. Then a newer, deeper happiness enfolded them.

But there came a twilight hour when, sitting by his chair and whispering of the wonder that was to come, she suddenly began to cry softly.

"But why, why, dear?" he asked in tender astonishment.

"Only—only to think, Jeremy, that I shall never see it!"

## VI.

ONE evening in April, while Jeremy was reading and Barbara sewing in the little candle-lit parlour, almost simultaneously with a sudden downpour of rain came a knock at the front door. Jeremy, startled by this unwonted occurrence, went himself to answer the summons, and, opening the door, was confronted by a stout, youngish man dressed in black, with elegant ruffles and a gold-headed cane.

"Your pardon, sir," said the new-comer, "but may I crave a moment's shelter during this shower? I am scarce equipped for the elements."

"Pray enter," said Jeremy hospitably.

"I am from London, and lodging at the White Hart at Bullingford for the night," the stranger explained, shaking the rain-drops from his hat. "During a stroll before supper I lost my way, and this storm has surprised me at your gate. I make a thousand apologies for deranging you."

"If you are wet, the parlour fire will dry you. I beg you, sir, to follow me," said Jeremy. He led the way through the dark passage and, pausing with his hand on the door-knob, turned to the stranger and said with his grave courtesy—

"I think it right to warn you, sir, that I am afflicted with a certain personal disfigurement which not all persons can look upon with equanimity."

"Sir," replied the other, "my name is John Hattaway, Surgeon at St. Thomas's Hospital in London, and I am used to regard with equanimity all forms of human affliction."

Mr. Hattaway was shown into the parlour and introduced in due form to Barbara. A chair was set for him near the fire. In the talk that followed, he showed himself to be a man of parts and education. He was on his way, he said, to Oxford, to perform an operation on the Warden of Merton College.

"What kind of operation?" asked Barbara.

His quick, keen eyes swept her like a searchlight.

"Madam," said he, not committing himself, "'tis but a slight one."

But when Barbara had left the room to mull some claret for her guest, Mr. Hattaway turned to Jeremy.

"'Tis a cataract," said he, "I am about to remove from the eye of the Warden of Merton, by the new operation invented by my revered master, Mr. William Cheselden, my immediate predecessor at St. Thomas's. I did not tell your wife, for certain reasons; but I noticed that she is blinded by the same disease."

Jeremy rose from his chair.

"Do you mean that you will restore the Warden's sight?"

"I have every hope of doing so."

"But if his sight can be restored—then my wife's—"

"He can be restored also," said the surgeon complacently.

Jeremy sat down feeling faint and dizzy.

"Did you not know that cataract was curable?"

"I am scholar enough," answered Jeremy, "to have read that King John of Arragon was so cured by the Jew, Abiathar of Lerida, by means of a needle thrust through the eyeball——"

"Barbarous, my dear sir, barbarous!" cried the surgeon, raising a white, protesting hand. "One in a million may be so cured. There is even now a pestilential fellow of a quack, calling himself the Chevalier Taylor, who is prodding folks' eyes with a six-inch skewer. Have you never heard of him?"

"Alas, sir," said Jeremy, "I live so out of the world, and my daily converse is limited to my dear wife and the parson hard by, who is as recluse a scholar as I am myself."

"If you wish your wife to regain her sight," said Mr. Hattaway, "avoid this Chevalier Taylor like the very deuce. But if you will entrust her to my care, Mr. Hattaway, Surgeon, of St. Thomas's Hospital, London, pupil of the great Cheselden——"

He waved his hand by way of completing the sentence.

"When?" asked Jeremy, greatly agitated.

"After her child is born."

"Shall I tell her?" Jeremy trembled.

"As you will. No—perhaps you had better wait."

Then Barbara entered, bearing a silver tray, with the mulled claret and glasses, proud of her blind surety of movement. Mr. Hattaway sprang to assist her, and, unknown to her, took the opportunity of scrutinising her eyes. Then he nodded confidently at Jeremy.

## VII.

FROM that evening Jeremy's martyrdom began. Hitherto he had regarded the blindness of his wife as a special dispensation of Divine Providence. She had not seen him, save as a shadowy mass on that first afternoon, and had formed no conception of his disfigurement beyond the vague impression conveyed to her by loving fingers touching his face. She had made her own mental picture of him, as she had said, and, whatever it was, so far from repelling her, it pleased her mightily. Her ignorance indeed was bliss—for both of them. And now, thought poor Jeremy, knowledge would come with the restored vision, and, like our first two wise parents, they would be driven out of Eden. Sometimes the devil entered his heart and prompted cowardly concealment. Why tell Barbara of Hattaway's proposal?



Why disturb a happiness already so perfect ? All her other senses were eyes to her. She had grown almost unconscious of her affliction. She were happier loving him with blinded eyes than recoiling from him in horror with seeing ones. It was in sooth for her own dear happiness that she should remain in darkness. But then Jeremy remembered the only cry her brave soul had ever uttered, and, after wrestling long in prayer, he knew that the Evil One had spoken, and in the good, old-fashioned, simple way he bade Satan get behind him. "*Retro me, Satanas.*" The words are in his diary, printed in capital letters.

But one day, when she repeated her cry, his heart ached for her, and he comforted her with the golden hope. She wept tears of joy and flung her arms around his neck and kissed him, and from that day forth filled the house with song and laughter and the mirth of unbounded happiness. But Jeremy, though he bespoke her tenderly and hopefully, felt that he had signed his death warrant. Now and then, when her gay spirit danced through the glowing future, he was tempted to say : "When you see me as I am, your love will turn to loathing and our heaven to hell." But he could not find it in his heart to dash her joy. And she never spoke of seeing him : only of seeing the child and the sun and the flowers, and the buttons of his shirts, which she vowed must seem to be sewn on by a drunken cobbler.

### VIII.

THE child was born, a boy, strong and lusty—to Jeremy the incarnation of miraculous wonder. That the thing was alive, with legs and arms and feet and hands, and could utter sounds, which it did with much vigour, made demands almost too great on his credulity.

"What is he like ?" asked Barbara.

This was a poser for Jeremy. For the pink brat was like nothing on earth—save any other new-born infant.

"I think," he said hesitatingly, "I think he may be said to resemble Cupid. He has a mouth like Cupid's bow."

"And Cupid's wings ?" she laughed. "Fie, Jeremy ! I thought we had born to us a Christian child."

"But that he has a body," said Jeremy, "I should say he was a cherub. He has eyes of a celestial blue, and his nose——"

"Yes, yes, his nose ?" came breathlessly from Barbara.

"I'm afraid, my dear, there is so little of it to judge by," said Jeremy.

"Before the summer's out, I shall be able to judge for myself," said Barbara ; and the Great Terror gripped the man's heart.

The days passed, and Barbara rose from her bed and again sang and laughed about the house.

"See, I am strong enough to withstand any operation," she declared one day, holding out the babe at arms' length.

"Not yet," said Jeremy, "not yet. The child needs you."

The child was asleep. She felt with her foot for its cradle, and with marvellous certainty deposited him gently in the nest, and covered him with the tiny coverlet. Then she turned to Jeremy.

"My husband, don't you wish me to have my sight restored ?"

"How can you doubt it ?" he cried. "I would have you undergo this operation were my life the fee."

She came close to him and put her hands about his maimed face.

"Dear," she said, "do you think anything could change my love for you ?"

It was the first hint that she had divined his fears ; but he remained silent, every fibre of his being shrinking from the monstrous argument. For answer he kissed her hands, as she withdrew them softly.

At last the time came for the great adventure. Letters passed between Jeremy and Mr. Hattaway of St. Thomas's Hospital, who engaged lodgings in Cork Street, so that they should be near his own residence in Bond Street hard by. A great travelling chariot and post-horses were hired from Bullingford, two great horse-pistols, which Jeremy had never fired off in his life, were loaded and primed and put in the holsters, and one morning in early August Jeremy and Barbara and the nurse and the baby started on their perilous journey. They lay at Reading that night, and arrived without misadventure at Cork Street on the following afternoon. Mr. Hattaway called in the evening with two lean and solemn young men, his apprentices—for even the great Mr. Hattaway was as yet but a Barber-Surgeon practising a trade under the control of a City guild—and made his preparations for the morrow.

In these days of anæsthetics and cocaine, sterilised instruments, trained nurses and scientific ventilation, it is almost impossible to realise the conditions under which surgical operations were conducted in the first half of the eighteenth century. Yet they occasionally were successful, and patients sometimes



"One fine lady . . . fell back, shrieking that she had seen a monster, and pretended to faint."

did survive, and nobody complained, thinking, like Barbara Wendover, that all was for the best in this best of all possible worlds. For as she lay in the close, darkened room the next day after the operation was over, tended by a chattering beldame of a midwife, she took the burning pain in her bandaged eyes

—after the dare-devil fashion of the time Mr. Hattaway had operated on both at once—as part of the cure, and thanked God she was born into so marvellous an epoch. Then Jeremy came to her and sat by her bed and held her hand, and she was very happy.

But Jeremy then, and in the slow, torturing

days that followed, went about shrunken like a man doomed to worse than death. London increased his agony. At first a natural curiosity—for he had passed through the town but twice before, once as he set out for the grand tour with Dr. Tubbs, and once on his return thence—and a countryman's craving for air took him out into the busy streets. But he found the behaviour of the populace far different from that of the inhabitants of Bullingford, who passed him by respectfully though with averted faces. Porters and lackeys openly jeered at him, ragged children summoned their congeners and followed hooting in his train. It was a cruel age, and elegant gentlemen in flowered silk coats and lace ruffles had no compunction in holding their cambric handkerchiefs before their eyes and vowing, within his hearing, that, stap their vitals, such a fellow should wear a mask or be put into the Royal Society's Museum; and in St. James's Street one fine lady, stepping out of her sedan-chair almost into his arms, fell back, shrieking that she had seen a monster, and pretended to faint as the obsequious staymaker ran out of his shop to her assistance.

Nothing could have been worse for Jeremy than this visit to London. Much the same had happened on his miserable foreign journey, but during his ten years' peace at Bullingford these cruel memories had all but faded from his mind. Now they were poignantly revived. He was nothing less than a horror to humanity. His morbid terror was intensified a thousandfold. He ceased to go abroad in daylight, and only crept about the streets at night, even then nervously avoiding the glare of a chance-met linkboy's torch. Desperate thoughts came to him during these gloomy rambles. Fear of God alone, as is evident from the diary, prevented him from taking his life. And the poor wretch prayed for he knew not what.

## IX.

ONE morning, Mr. Hattaway, after his examination of the patient, entered the parlour, where Jeremy was reading Tillotson's Sermons (there were the fourteen volumes of them in the room's unlively bookcase), and closed the door behind him with an air of importance.

"Sir," said he, "I bring you good news."

Jeremy closed his book. "She sees?"

"On removing the bandages just now," replied Mr. Hattaway, "I perceived to my

great regret that with the left eye my skill has been unavailing. The failure is due, I believe, to an injury to the retina which I have been unable to discover." He paused and took snuff. "But I rejoice to inform you that sight is restored to the right eye. I admitted light into the room, and though the vision is diffused, which a lens will rectify, she saw me distinctly."

"Thank God she has the blessing of sight," said Jeremy reverently.

"Amen," said the surgeon. He took another pinch. "Also, perhaps, thank your humble servant for restoring it."

"I owe you an unpayable debt," replied Jeremy.

"She is crying out for the baby," said Mr. Hattaway. "If you will kindly send it in to her, I can allow her a fleeting glimpse of it, before I complete the rebandaging for the day."

Jeremy rang the bell and gave the order. "And I?" he inquired bravely.

The surgeon hesitated and scratched his plump cheek.

"You know that my wife has never seen me."

"To-morrow, then," said Hattaway.

The nurse and child appeared at the doorway, and the surgeon followed them into Barbara's room. Jeremy fell on his knees.

When the surgeon had left the house, he went to Barbara, and found her crooning over the babe which lay in her arms.

"I've seen him, dear, I've seen him!" she cried joyously. "He is the most wonderfully beautiful thing on the earth. His eyes are light blue, and mine are dark, so he must have yours. And his mouth is made for kisses, and his expression is that of a babe born in Paradise."

Jeremy bent over and looked at the boy, who sniggered at him in a most unparadiacial fashion, and they talked, parent-wise, over his perfections.

"Before we go back to Bullingford, you will let me take a coach, Jeremy, and drive about the streets and show him to the town? I will hold him up and cry: 'Ladies and gentlemen, look! 'Tis the tenth wonder of the world. You only have this one chance of seeing him.' And I'll see London, too. They say it's monstrous vast. And I must go to one of the great shops and buy me a fine gown, so that you may love me, dear. I vow I know not what I wear nowadays. I must look like a turnip wrapped in a dish-clout!"

She rattled on, in the gayest of moods, making him laugh in spite of the Terror. The failure of the operation in the left eye she put aside as of no account. One eye was a necessity, but two were a mere luxury.

"And it is the little rogue that will reap the benefit," she cried, cuddling the child. "For when he is naughty, mammy will turn the blind side of her face to him."

"And will you turn the blind side of your face to me?" asked Jeremy, with a quiver of the lips.

She took his hand and pressed it against her cheek.

"You have no faults, my beloved husband, for me to be blind to," she said, wilfully or not misunderstanding him; and he dared make no further reference to the Terror.

Such rapture had the sight of the child given her that she insisted on its lying with her that night, a truckle bed being placed in the room for the child's nurse. When Jeremy took leave of her before going to his own room, he bent over her and whispered—

"To-morrow."

Her sweet lips—pathetically sweet below the bandage—parted in a smile—and they never seemed sweeter to the anguished man—and she also whispered "To-morrow!" and kissed him.

He went away, and as he closed the door he felt it was the Gate of Paradise shut against him for ever.

He did not sleep that night, but spent it as a brave man spends the night before his execution. For, after all, Jeremy Wendover was a gallant gentleman.

In the morning he went into Barbara's room before breakfast, as his custom was, and found her still gay and bubbling over with the joy of life. And when he was leaving her, she stretched out her hands and clasped his maimed face, as she had done once before, and said the same reassuring words. Nothing could shake her immense, her steadfast love. But Jeremy, entering the parlour, and catching sight of himself in the Queen Anne mirror over the mantelpiece, shuddered to the inmost roots of his being. She had no conception of what she vowed.

He was scarce through breakfast when Mr. Hattaway entered, a full hour before his usual time.

"I am in a prodigious hurry," said he, "for I must go post-haste into Norfolk to operate on my Lord Winteringham for the stone."

There were no specialists in those days. Eyes or stomachs, all were one to the

eighteenth-century surgeon. Jeremy, like an eighteenth-century gentleman, to whom the peerage was a matter of grave import, expressed the polite hope that his lordship would successfully pass through the operation.

"I have not a moment to lose," said Mr. Hattaway, "so I pray you to accompany me to your wife's bedchamber."

The awful moment had come. Jeremy courteously opened doors for the surgeon to pass through, and followed with death in his heart. When they entered the room, he noticed that Barbara had caused the nurse's truckle bed to be removed, and that she was lying demure as a nun in a newly made bed. The surgeon flung the black curtains from the window, and let the summer light filter through the linen blinds.

"We will have a longer exposure this morning," said he, "and to-morrow a little longer still, and so on, until we can face the daylight altogether. Now, madam, if you please."

He busied himself with the bandages. Jeremy, on the other side of the bed, stood clasping Barbara's hand: stood stock-still, with thumping heart, holding his breath, setting his teeth, nerving himself for the sharp, instinctive gasp, the reflex recoil, that he knew would be the death sentence of their love. And at that supreme moment he cursed himself bitterly for a fool, for not having told her of his Terror, for not having sufficiently prepared her for the devastating revelation. But now it was too late. His grip on her delicate hand tightened unconsciously, and she uttered a little indrawn hiss of pain.

The bandages were removed. The surgeon bent down and peered into the eyes. He started back in dismay. Before her right eye he rapidly waved his finger.

"Do you see that?"

"No," said Barbara.

"Heavens, madam!" cried he, with a stricken look on his plump face, "what in the world have you been doing with yourself since I left you?"

Great drops of sweat stood on Jeremy's brow.

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"She can't see. The eye is injured. Yesterday, save for the crystalline lens which I extracted, it was as sound as mine or yours."

"I was afraid something had happened," said Barbara in a matter-of-fact tone. "Baby was restive in the night and pushed his little fist into my eye."

"Good Heavens, madam!" exclaimed the angry surgeon, "you don't mean to say that you took a young baby to sleep with you in your condition?"

Barbara nodded, as if found out in a trifling peccadillo. "I suppose I'm blind for ever?" she asked casually.

He examined the eye again. There was a moment's dead silence. Jeremy, white-lipped and haggard, hung on the verdict. Then Hattaway rose, extended his arms and let them drop helplessly against his sides.

"Yes," said he. "The sight is gone."

Jeremy put his hands to his head, staggered, and, overcome by the reaction from the Terror and the shock of the unlooked-for calamity, fell in a faint on the floor.

After he had recovered and the surgeon had gone, promising to send his apprentice the next day to dress the eyes, which, for fear of inflammation, still needed tending, Jeremy sat by his wife's bedside with an aching heart.

"'Tis the will of God," said he gloomily. "We must not rebel against His decrees."

"But, you dear, foolish husband," she cried, half laughing, "who wants to rebel against them? Not I, of a certainty. I am the happiest woman in the world."

"'Tis but to comfort me that you say it," said Jeremy.

"'Tis the truth. Listen"—she sought for his hand and continued with sweet seriousness—"I was selfish to want to regain my sight; but my soul hungered to see my babe. And now that I have seen him I care not. Just that one little peep into the heaven of his face was all I wanted. And 'twas the darling wretch himself who settled that I should not have more." After a little she said: "Come nearer to me," and she drew his ear to her lips and whispered—

"Although I have not regained my sight, on the other hand, I have not lost a thing far dearer—the face that I love which I made up of your voice and the splash of water and the sunset and the summer air." She kissed him. "My poor husband, how you must have suffered!"

And then Jeremy knew the great, brave soul of the woman whom the Almighty had given him to wife, and, as he puts it in his diary, he did glorify God exceedingly.

So when Barbara was able to travel again, Jeremy sent for the great roomy chariot and the horse-pistols and the post-horses, and they went back to Bullingford, where they spent the remainder of their lives in unclouded felicity.

## A WINTER NIGHT.

**A**T twilight when the red moon rises  
 Above the fir trees topped with snow,  
 When homely shapes take strange disguises  
 And in the dusk portentous grow,  
 Beneath the pallid sky, without a cloud,  
 The hard, white earth lies dead and in its shroud.

Not dead, for from that withered heather  
 There steals a hungry, restless hare,  
 Forced from its upland by the weather  
 To seek,—while loping here and there  
 Along the sheltered hedgerows of the field,—  
 Stray leaves and blades the snow has not concealed.

Not dead, for roosting, puffed-out thrushes  
 And redwings, startled at your tread,  
 Rise in the air in frightened rushes  
 From every frozen withy-bed,  
 Then back they drop to roost again until  
 Once more the snowbound world lies deadlly still.



# WHAT THE BOY SCOUT MOVEMENT MAY DO FOR BRITAIN.

BY THE RIGHT HON. EARL OF MEATH.



HAT does not the British Empire owe to Lord Roberts and to the hero of the defence of Mafeking? For not only did they save the honour of the country in the

hour of its direst

need in South Africa, but instead of resting on their well-earned laurels as they might have done, they have both, in their respective spheres, laboured unweariedly night and day to arouse Britons to a knowledge of the dangers which threaten their beloved motherland, and have shown them how they may, if they choose, safeguard their position amongst the nations, and their hearths and homes from foreign aggression.

Lord Roberts's labours are well known. General Sir R. S. S. Baden-Powell's services in inaugurating and bringing to a successful issue the Boy Scout movement are nearly as well known, especially since the appearance in Hyde Park on "Empire Day" of the well-disciplined force of some fifteen hundred Scouts, besides several thousand other marshalled boys and girls, who saluted the flag and Lord Roberts on that memorable day, and made the hearts of no less than a quarter of a million of spectators to tingle with patriotic fervour.

But why should the sight of fifteen hundred lads, a fraction of the great force of two hundred and fifty thousand Boy Scouts throughout the Empire, cheer the hearts of unemotional Englishmen? These young lads can be of no real present military service to the Empire, and even when in a few years they have developed into full-sized men, their numbers, though large, can hardly be seriously considered of first-class practical value in the military defence of the Empire. And yet, as noble example is contagious, in spite of such criticism, the thoughtful and patriotic Briton, at the sight of these lads

marching past the great Field-Marshal at the salute, with straightened backs, and eyes bright with determination to do their duty, could not fail to feel strengthened and to take heart of grace that so many of the children of to-day who are to be the men of to-morrow, through the teaching of General Sir R. S. S. Baden-Powell, have learnt aright the lesson that those who inherit the privileges of Empire, won by the blood and treasure of duty-loving, hardy, self-sacrificing ancestors, must themselves be duty-loving, hardy, and self-sacrificing, and are bound in honour to hand on to their successors unimpaired the magnificent heritage to which, without exertion of their own, they in the providence of God have been privileged to succeed.

A great national, educational lesson lies at the back of this Scout movement.

It is very generally acknowledged that one of the most serious dangers which threaten our country is the indiscipline which is so sadly apparent amongst numbers of the rising generation of all classes and of both sexes. Witness the number of well-to-do men and women who never give a thought to national responsibilities, who never raise a finger in support of any useful public undertaking unless it be by attendance at some social function where they hope to advance some personal petty ambition, men and women who live exclusively for selfish pleasure, for sport, or for dress; witness the slackers of both sexes and of all classes who shirk duty of all kinds, who do as little work as they can, and enjoy the fruits gathered by the hands of others; witness the vast number of men and women of a lower class, determined to do no work, who, joining the ranks of the genuinely unemployed, make it more difficult for these latter to find honest work, and who live upon the State or private charity. These loafers and idle parasites dry up the fountains of benevolence, are a curse to the genuine unemployed, and constitute a weakness and a source of serious danger to the nation.

There is little doubt that the great mass of these idlers owe their demoralisation in large part to lack of training and of adequate control and discipline in youth.

Of late years the bonds of discipline have been disastrously weakened in the home and in the school, to the detriment of society and the State.

The causes of this relaxation of discipline are not far to seek. Some of them are due to a praiseworthy sentiment of humanity carried beyond the bounds of reason and of common sense.

Owing to the excessive severity of our forefathers in the treatment of children, a phase of thought has of late years set in which errs in the other extreme, and which neglects the future happiness of the child in a vain effort to afford it the fleeting pleasure of the moment.

Many parents have been carried away by the attractiveness of a doctrine which appeals strongly to the kindly instincts of men and women, but it is not only the parents who are to blame, some portion of the responsibility for this state of things must be borne by benevolent societies which, actuated by the best of motives, have by their unwise action occasionally made it difficult for parents to control their children; and even magistrates have not always been judicious in their discrimination between what is justifiable and what is unjustifiable in the treatment of the young.

Without consciously accepting the doctrines of the hysterical, sentimental school, there are many parents, otherwise excellent men and women, in whose homes, partly through idleness, partly through cowardice, and the desire to lead an easy life, the practical evils resulting from neglect of control may be seen in children who are permitted to be a law unto themselves, who are never called upon to subdue self, and who are the cause of unhappiness to themselves, of constant worry to their parents, and of annoyance to their neighbours. Had assiduity in the performance of duty, and instantaneous, unquestioning, and cheerful obedience been insisted on in early years, all this trouble would have been avoided.

In this connection, I would strongly recommend the perusal of some short leaflets, published under the expressive title of "Duty and Discipline," which can be purchased at one penny each. They are from the pens of writers eminent in very different walks of life, including the late leading German educationalist, Professor Paulson,

Bishop Welldon, Prebendary Carlile of the Church Army, the Headmaster of Eton, the Archbishop of Dublin, the Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, the Editor of *The Spectator*, and several other well-known men and women.

Now, the above remarks are in no way irrelevant to the title which heads this paper.

Our young people need more discipline. The Scout movement is popular, and brings with it just the discipline which our lads require, and which will make men of them. It arrives in the nick of time. It will save the weak lad from himself and from his parent's folly. It will turn him from an undisciplined slacker into a man capable of self-control, and fitted to face victoriously the temptations and the stern realities of life.

In short, it is calculated to make of a lad a hardy, virile, truth-speaking, duty-loving Briton, worthy to bear the heavy but honourable burdens attached to citizenship of the mightiest Empire the world has ever known.

Hence, from my heart I thank General Sir R. S. S. Baden-Powell for having devised means by which the British lad may, without soldiering, and without being exposed to any of the moral dangers of a soldier's life, obtain all the undoubted moral and physical benefits to be derived from discipline. May every success attend his efforts, and may he receive the support and encouragement of every man and woman who wishes well to the British Empire.

His Gracious Majesty the King, with his usual clearness of vision in recognising worth in his subjects, has already set the example by recently conferring on the General his well-earned knighthood.

Dark, lowering thunderclouds have already arisen above the political horizon—clouds which threaten no good towards the subjects and dominions of King Edward the Seventh.

The British people are already being challenged by the virile races of the world to show cause why they should be permitted to retain that leading position amongst the nations which they inherited from their duty-loving, hardy ancestors.

The Darwinian theory of the survival of the fittest applies to nations as well as to species and individuals.

We must as a race prove our worthiness, or we may rest assured that, in accordance with the wise dispensation of Providence, we shall be displaced, and rightly displaced, from the seats of privilege and of power.

Weakness, moral as well as physical, however decked out with the trappings of strength,



*Photo by*

*(Halfpines, Ltd.)*

GENERAL SIR R. S. BADEN-POWELL, C.B.

always has yielded, and, happily for the world, always will yield, to real power; and let us rest assured that the British race and the British Empire will prove no exception to this universal law of Nature.

A thorough national arousing, a determination on the part of the mass of British

men and women—aye, and of British boys and girls—to put aside self and to seek the best interests of the community, can alone save us from the moral decay which has preceded the fall of all previous Empires.

I recognise in the Scout movement an effective means towards this end, but in so

much as girls need as much as boys the stimulus of a wholesome discipline to strengthen moral fibre, I trust that it will not be long before we shall see a Girls' Scout movement developing on lines suitable to the female sex.

Let us train up our boys and girls to be God-loving and God-fearing, to be true to

duty, law-abiding, hard-working, not afraid of pain and discomfort, obedient and respectful to lawful authority, loyal, patriotic, and self-sacrificing, and the nation and Empire need have no fear for the future. "There is no act," says Thomas Carlyle, "more moral between men than that of rule and obedience."

All honour, then, to the Scout movement!



## WHITE WALLS OF ENGLAND.

**W**HITE walls of England, beckoning every thought  
 Across the flying foam,  
 Like outstretched arms whereby the heart is brought  
 To shelter safe at home,  
 To you we press, toward you we gaze,  
 In alien lands, o'er weary ways;  
 Through desert drouth our darkening eyes  
 Behold you rise!

White walls of England, gleaming on our sight  
 Against the windy blue,  
 O guardian ramparts of our soul's delight,  
 We serve and strive for you!

White walls of England, through the dust of death  
 We see your splendour soar;  
 Your grassy sweetness and your salt sea-breath  
 Are ours again once more.  
 We hear the lapping surges beat  
 Among the shadows at your feet,  
 On your beloved name we call,—  
 And strike,—and fall.

White walls of England, bulwarks of our might,  
 Steadfast and firm and true,  
 Round the wide world, your sons, by day and night,  
 Dream of you,—die for you!

MAY BYRON.

# A WOMAN'S WHIM.

By FRANK STAYTON.



HE had promised to marry Harry Westmacott, as a sort of surrender to the inevitable. The weeks during which the engagement had lasted had been too full of excitement to allow her thoughts to be concentrated on the prospect of an immediate marriage; but now that the eve of her wedding-day had arrived, she was in a curiously paradoxical state of mingled calm and panic.

The marriage was a thoroughly satisfactory one from the point of view of the world in which she moved. Westmacott was wealthy, cultured, one of those enviable people whom no worries seem to reach, no misfortunes seem to touch. He was satisfied with his choice. Helen Parflete looked well, dressed well, talked cleverly. She had been properly and expensively prepared for the position she was to fill. She would do him credit, and, apart from that, was eminently desirable in her own personality.

She was, so he told himself, delightfully free from crazes, entirely lacking in temperament, a woman who commanded homage wherever she went. She had every quality that he desired in his wife.

In his eyes, temperament was a kind of mental indigestion, not to be encouraged or yielded to in any way.

Helen realised what her married life would be; she knew that it would be lacking in all the pleasant little confidential understandings that are the essence of real companionship. But she had faced the question from the point of view of her own particular set; and her decision seemed to her the only sensible one. Westmacott could give her—and would delight in giving her—so many of the things that go to make a woman's life bearable; his wealth, his assured position, his very views of life seemed sheltering and pleasant. She could dress expensively—and that is a large element in a woman's life. She could have carriages,

horses, motors, diamonds, opera-boxes; she could travel; she could indulge her artistic perceptions. There would be so many worth-while things in her life to help the years to pass, free of boredom. There would be no struggle to keep up appearances, no fear of the future, no wanting the best and having to be content with the second best. The best of everything would be hers. She had a polite affection for her *fiancé*. He was scarcely the kind of man to win more from a woman of her temperament. And, after all, she said, love was only exaggerated sentimentality, and such things were *bourgeois*—absurdly so.

There had been other men in her life; she had had suitors by the score, all sorts and conditions—rich men, poor men, soldiers, sailors, business men, idle men, clever men. They had meant something to her at the moment; but the moment had always been transitory.

There was one exception, but in that case the man's means made marriage impossible. He was a poor man; clever, a man in whom people believed, a man who with decent luck ought to win success from the greedy grasp of the jealous world. But—she was afraid to wait, and still more afraid to face poverty. There had been moments when the idea of poverty had had no terrors for her, when she had felt a longing to give up all the frills that constituted her idea of life, and to climb the long and slippery ladder of endeavour, sharing his hopes, his disappointments, and his success. But such longings would be succeeded by doubts; panic would take the place of belief. The delightful feeling of “taking chances” would fade into a dread of what the chances might be. Then she would wrap herself more closely in her costly furs, and mentally shiver at the prospect of economy, of sharing her lover's struggles.

Her environment had taught her to be selfish, to put herself and her own wishes first, to dread self-surrender. She had never in her life voluntarily renounced anything on which she had set her mind, had never permitted her own desires to take second place to the wishes of another. It had never



entered into her scheme of things that such a course was even sensible. The delights of self-sacrifice seemed to her a very foolish feeling—very old-fashioned and absurd. So, when this most persistent of all her suitors asked her to risk things for the sake of the love he laid at her feet, she could only smile kindly and shake her head.



"Unable to decide as to the exact position in which each guest should sit."

"It's impossible," she told him; "absurdly impossible. I wasn't brought up to be a poor man's wife. I know nothing of house-keeping. I'm not economical. I dress expensively. I don't know how to deny myself anything I may want. No! we can be friends; it would be ridiculous to attempt anything else."

The man had persisted until, seeing how

impossible it was, how like talking to a brick wall, he had suddenly vanished out of her life; and she had missed him a lot, missed his enthusiasm, his persevering attempts to pierce her armour of selfishness, his "difference" from the other men who told her of their love.

His desertion helped her to come to a decision. If she married Westmacott, there would be no more temptation to run risks and play at fairy-tales. So she had promised to marry him early in April. The weeks had gone calmly by, and now the day was almost at hand when the fulfilment of her promise was demanded of her.

She had wondered several times how she would spend her last evening of freedom, and, while so engaged, a curious whim had come to her. She thought she would like to see once more all the men with whom she had at various times imagined herself in love. She was curious to see what effect they would have on her now—on the eve of her marriage. So she had written to each a polite little note, asking him to dine with her on this particular night. They were asked particularly not to answer the invitation, but just to come.

Westmacott had not been invited; in fact, he had been told that his presence would spoil everything, so he philosophically accepted his dismissal and dined at his club.

Eight o'clock was the hour named, and at ten minutes to eight Helen came downstairs to cast a final look over the arrangements of the table. She was dressed in grey, as a kind of compliment to her unsuccessful suitors, but chiefly because she looked particularly well in grey. The round table was a mass of flowers, of old silver and delicate napery, with soft shaded lights, showing it to the best possible advantage.

Helen found herself unable to decide as



"Came quietly over to where she stood smiling perplexedly."

to the exact position in which each guest should sit. Of course, Morton Ridge, being a rich man, and a man of importance in the diplomatic world, *should* sit on her right; but then she really liked him the least of all her suitors. Who else was there, then? There was Reggie Carew, the famous big-game hunter, a bronzed and self-contained young man who could rarely be stimulated into talking of himself and his doings. No; Reggie wouldn't mind *where* he sat. Mechanically she went through the list, but the situation would not adjust itself; the only man she omitted from the list of candidates for the place of honour was the one man she wished to have beside her. And she wondered whether he would come. He took her more seriously than the others; he would joke on all subjects save one—his love for her. It was very real to him, very strong, and very wonderful. It was something between them—a bond, that made the very mention of it by other people seem like a profanation. She knew this—or guessed it—and smiled a little sadly as she remembered the pictures he had painted of their future—so hideously impossible, yet so wonderfully desirable.

"Perhaps I'd better leave it to chance and let everyone sit wherever he happens to be standing," she thought. Eight o'clock struck. She wondered who would be the first arrival and how he would behave. Would he talk about himself, his successes, his career, or would he become deferentially reminiscent of their former play-days? She scarcely knew which she would prefer?

The minute-hand crept on, and her foot began to tap the ground impatiently. She knew the cook would be tearing his hair; it was a great responsibility to feed a number of men accustomed to the luxuries of club life, so she devoutly hoped the dinner would not be spoiled.

Then she looked at herself in the mirror, and sighed, and wondered, and tried to picture herself in clothes not made by Paquin; but all she could see was her wedding-dress, and a veil that seemed to stop her breathing. She shivered a little, and crossed over to the fireplace and gazed contemplatively into the fire.

She awoke from her dreams with a start as the door was opened by the butler, and the one man with whom she would rather not have been left *tête-à-tête* entered the room.

He almost choked for a moment at finding himself actually with her again, then came quietly over to where she stood smiling

perplexedly at him, and took both of her hands in his.

"It's you; it's really you," he whispered.

"Of course it is," she laughed. "And do you know that you're nearly half an hour late?"

"Late! Do you mean—do you mean you were expecting me," he whispered, a little perturbed.

"Why, surely! Didn't you get my letter?"

"I haven't had a line from you for nearly a year. I only returned from the Continent an hour ago."

"Then you didn't—then you haven't——?" She stammered, hesitated, coloured nervously, and looked at him with a half-perplexed, half-regretful appeal.

"Haven't what?" he asked, a little afraid.

"You don't know why you're here?"

"That's exactly what I *do* know."

"I mean—you don't know why I wrote to you to come?"

"I don't mind. I don't mind anything, now that I'm here."

"Oh, but you don't understand," she protested.

"I understand one thing," he replied, taking possession of her left hand, "and that is—that I'm here with you; that I'm not dreaming, that you're real—and that it's what I've dreamed of and longed for—always, from the beginning of things."

His hand caressed her fingers and felt the ring on her third finger. He went very pale.

She rose and faced him.

"Tell me," he said.

She told him. She made no excuses, but just made a definite statement of facts, omitting nothing, explaining nothing. He listened in silence.

When she had finished, he sat very quietly, watching her face, mentally reviewing the whole situation at lightning speed.

"But you are the only one who has come. The others have not even made excuses," she told him.

"You told them not to reply."

"They should have replied."

She sat down again and watched him. Their eyes met. Hers fell a trifle. In a moment he was at her side and had taken her in his arms.

"My dear, my dear! It isn't too late!" he whispered.

For a moment she yielded to his embrace, then pulled herself together and spoke with apparent coldness.

"Of course it's too late," she said with dignity. "I am to be married to-morrow. Besides, haven't I told you that I'm not cut out for a poor man's wife?"

"If you could only care, care so that to sacrifice something you want seems to be the most perfect thing in the world, care so that the frills of life don't seem important——"

"But they *are* important—to a woman."

"They seem more important than they are. Women frighten themselves with bogeys, like children who dread an unopened cupboard."

She shook her head doubtfully. "Men can't understand how women feel. They're so different. They don't understand how horrid it is to be in a room with other women who are better dressed. It makes them uncomfortable and wretched, and they go home and cry, and are cross and frizzled, and it makes life impossible. I couldn't do it. No. I've chosen my way and I'll stick to it."

"Don't you care at all?" he asked.

"Don't you see, it's *because* I care that I can't do it? It's because I care that I won't make you wretched and spoil your career? You don't *know* how horrid I can be when I'm cross. And I should always be cross if I couldn't have the things I wanted to have, and had to ride in omnibuses when I wanted cabs, and go to cheap dressmakers. I should be impossible."

He laughed lightly. "I think I'm beginning to understand. I think I never realised before that women scarcely ever *speaking* of real things as men do. They use speech to disguise their feelings, and sometimes wonder why men are so dense as to misunderstand them."

"How absurd!" said Helen.

"A man knows what he wants, and goes straight for it in a straight line without a look into by-ways or cross-roads, while a woman wants to explore every cross-road, every by-way, to look over every hedge, every fence, before taking the final step. Men like definite things; women dread them. The definite step is a million times more difficult for a woman than for a man, but, once it has been taken, she turns round and feels the protection of it, and rejoices in it, and learns to love it, and her fears and doubts vanish. As the years go on, she wonders why she was so afraid of the step—and her heart goes out to the man who persuaded her to take it!"

"The road's so full of pitfalls, so walled and narrow!" cried Helen.

"Love makes it broad and open. That sounds trite, but it's true."

"I'm afraid," she whispered. "It would be fun, though, wouldn't it? No! No! No! I couldn't? You mustn't make me say such things. Please don't talk like this."

"Doesn't it count at all to have a man work for you, to make a position just for you, to be thinking of you always, planning things for your happiness? Isn't it letter than accepting one that's ready made?"

"It sounds terribly interesting," she sighed.

"Oh, my dear! Don't you understand? Life wasn't given us for the purpose of thinking only of ourselves. Isolation is the most selfish, the most fatal thing. We all have angularities that need working into shape. We can do nothing alone. We can't sit in a tub and look out on the world as though we didn't belong to it. Better be an actor, however heavy the part, than remain in the audience for always. Life was given to us to live. Philosophy, detachment, soul-cultivation—they are all will-o'-the-wisps that lure us on to the swamp that sucks us in. To gain the best that life can offer us, we must have firm ground for our feet; the rest is all illusion. One can't eliminate human nature. One thinks one can—for a time. It's all illusion. We must risk all to gain all."

Helen looked at a photograph of Westmacott that was standing on the table. Then she looked at the man by her side.

"It's terribly hard having to decide for oneself," she whispered.

"Let's get married to-morrow morning and be off to Italy for our honeymoon by the afternoon boat," he urged.

"No! No! No! Think of all the fuss there'd be?" she protested.

"What do people matter? What does anything matter?"

"I wonder," she whispered. "But—can you afford it?"

"Easily," he laughed.

"Do you really, really want me to?"

He took her in his arms. "I hold the world in the hollow of my hand, if you trust yourself to me!"

\* \* \* \* \*

Of course, there was considerable excitement when the elopement was made known. Westmacott couldn't understand how she could possibly prefer taking such risks. But her husband kept his word. He is now a highly successful man. And they play at being economical sometimes, and sometimes delight in being very recklessly extravagant.

And they are absurdly happy.

# UNCLE JABEZ.

By NORMAN INNES,

*Author of "The Surge of War," "My Lady's Kiss," "The Lonely Guard," &c.*



"O think of it!" exclaimed Bill Waggett, coming to a sudden halt in the dusty road just short of "The Beehive." "And Sam Potts, too; to think of it!"

He thrust back his cap from his forehead and re-read the postcard, the tit-bit of the morning's mail, which, in interest, was well up to the average. As village postman he had become familiar with the handwriting of many of Northbourne's correspondents, and was able to make a pretty shrewd guess of the contents of the majority of the letters he daily brought over from Alchester. Not that he approved of letters—William hated secretiveness—it was postcards in which he revelled.

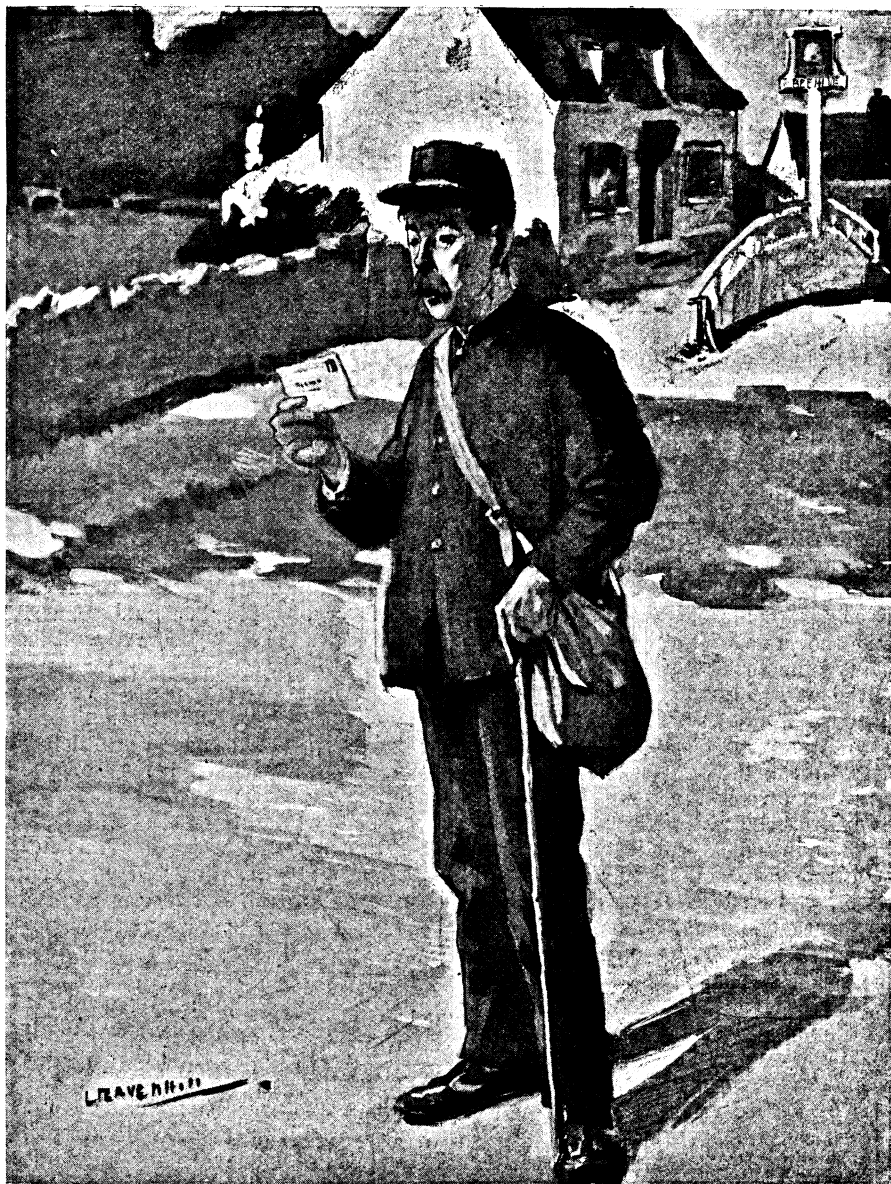
There were the usual half-dozen for the Hall. An Indian stamp was clear evidence of news from Squire Sparkett's soldier son; a neatly written address, surmounted by the Bath postmark, betrayed the Squire's only sister; and then, after a casual glance at some business circulars, the letter-carrier had shrugged his shoulders at the sight of a free boyish scrawl beneath a stamp set somewhat awry and defaced with "Cambridge."

"That'll be Master Rupert," he sighed, referring to the youngest of the Sparketts, the gist of whose erratic communications was as well known to Waggett as to the father's bankers. There were no postcards for the Hall, but there were two for Miss Morse, the pupil-teacher—one from a disconsolate admirer in Alchester complaining of her neglect in keeping an appointment the preceding Saturday, the other from a favoured swain, suggesting a meeting at the Southolt market-cross on the next Thursday afternoon. Then there was a picture-card for Miss Fair, a few lines of frigid invitation to the curate, and a further illustrated card from Brighton, directed in a masculine hand to the Vicar's cook, of which the much

harassed guardian of the mail disapproved. And then, having recovered from the affront to his feelings, he stood stock still as he scanned a postcard addressed to Mr. Samuel Potts.

Now, Potts was a poultry-farmer, and more often than not was referred to as "the poultry-farmer," the title being embellished with one or more adjectives the reverse of complimentary. Potts had been a life-long failure, and he admitted as much, with apologetic reference to the heights from which he had fallen. He would trace his descent from the early glories of a three-hundred acre holding, through the vicissitudes of a dairy farm upon the fringe of suburban Essex, a market-garden in Surrey, and so down the scale, plum-growing, mushroom-culture, and bee-keeping, leading in natural sequence to the strenuous calling of the poultry-farmer. He had selected Northbourne as the scene of his operations, and in an evil day had obtained the lease of some fifteen acres upon the outskirts of the village, where behind an elaborate system of wire-entanglement he had flanked a roomy, old-fashioned cottage which he called "The Bower," with an unsightly outwork of sheds, zinc-roofed shanties, coops and pens, to the scorn of his neighbours and the indignation of the Squire.

Potts was a mournful, heavy-visaged man, depressed by his struggle with adverse fortune and recalcitrant fowls, and but for the fact of being possessed of a pair of beady grey eyes, which no fall in the price of eggs or rise in the grain market could dim, one might have called him morose. Besides, he had a way with him, his tongue was silver, his manner deprecatory, and over all hung the glamour of failure—the bucolic mind is ever indulgent to ill-success. For the rest, he never smoked, never drank anything stronger than water unless at a friend's invitation, and was blessed with a meek-mannered helpmate and an ever-increasing burden of debts. He owed money right and left—in Alchester, Southolt, at the village shop—had wheedled loans from a dozen of his neighbours, and was in the Vicar's debt;



"It was postcards in which he revelled."

it was the Squire alone that had proved adamant to his specious appeals.

No wonder, then, that the postman started and paused abruptly as he scanned that card.

"The Grand Hotel, London,  
"6th May.

"MY DEAR NEPHEW POTTS," it ran,

"I am now returned from Australia, where I have made my fortune at the gold-fields, and mean to settle down in England.

As you know, you are my only relative, and I write to acquaint you that I am in hopes to pay you a visit and take your advice as how best to dispose of my money. I do not like London near so well as Australia. My love to Maria.—Your affectionate uncle,

"JABEZ POTTS."

Bill whistled, re-read the card, whistled again, and on the strength of the news turned into "The Beehive."



"Mornin', William," said Stubbins, the landlord, as he drew a mug of beer. "A letter for me?"

The other shook his head and sipped the beer in silence. Stubbins was his cousin on his mother's side, and, as a rule, skimmed the cream of the local news.

"Potts's uncle's back," said the uniformed figure, in the manner of one who announces an epoch-making event.

"Where from? Gaol? Didn't know Sam Potts had no uncle."

"He has, though—an Australian." The speaker drew the card from his letter-bag and held it towards his relative, who stared at it stolidly for a couple of minutes and then sucked in his breath.

"That's how it stands, Ted," said the postman, setting down his mug. "Sam Potts is a made man."

Without another word Waggett gave a hitch to his bag and stepped into the road, still brooding on the matter. At every door in his zigzag course through Northbourne he told the news of the wanderer's return, and so it came about that Mr. Samuel Potts, who lived at the further end of the village, was among the last to hear the tidings which were to have such an effect upon his immediate future. Now, the poultry-farmer was in what he called his garden, a portion of his estate much favoured by his feathered stock, if doing little credit to its owner's horticultural taste. With him was George Horspool, who had the reputation of being able to turn his hand to anything when sober and in the vein for work, and was at the moment absorbed in contemplation of the ruined beds about him. George was, as a rule, employed by Potts two days in the week, on one of which he made the journey to London in a crazy van loaded with samples of his master's produce and a miscellaneous assortment of rubbish, for with poultry-keeping Potts combined a carrier's business.

With a frigid nod for the man, Bill handed the master the well-thumbed card, together with a couple of requests for payment of an outstanding account, made his usual remark upon the weather, and, with curiosity on edge, stooped to refasten a boot-lace. Potts scanned the postcard, glanced once again at the address, and re-read the writing on the other side with a gradual lifting of his brows.

"That'll be Uncle Jabez," said he, ruminatively scratching his shaggy head and glancing at George; "Uncle Jabez Potts.

what we thought was dead and buried years ago, him what I was telling you of, the day the big Cochin was ate by the rats."

His henchman nodded.

"The bloke what found the gold?"

"My Uncle Jabez," rejoined the other, deprecating such irreverent reference to his relative.

"He must be rich, then, Mr. Potts?" hazarded the postman.

"How could he be otherwise, seeing as how he's been to them goldfields?" interposed Horspool witheringly. There was no love lost between him and Waggett.

The poultry-farmer nodded.

"Yes, he's what might be called rich, I reckon," he answered with a stolidity that challenged further interrogation.

"And he's no relatives?" suggested the postman.

"None—leastways, barring me," replied Potts, as though pitying his uncle's forlorn condition, and his voice sank away despondently. "Poor Uncle Jabe, as likely as not his riches is no more than a burden to him. He never could abear money, it always fidgeted him; never had a five-pound note but lay awake o' nights thinking how he might turn it to the good of others."

The weather-tanned face of the letter-carrier was a ravel of amazement.

"And supposing as you was rich, Mr. Potts—which to my thinking is not so unlikely—I reckon you'd have no difficulty in knowing what to do with your money?"

Potts looked at the inquirer and then at George Horspool; it was only the play of his keen grey eyes that relieved the gloom that had settled upon his features.

"Money?" said he contemptuously. "I've never troubled my head with no thought of it. It's not my way. Money brings responsibilities and duties. One has to think of one's friends in such circumstances. That's the good of money, to my mind—it enables us to repay good with good, little kindnesses that may have been done to one without no hope of reward."

And, delivered of these sentiments, he thrust the postcard into his pocket and lounged abstractedly down the path in the direction of his cottage.

For the next week—indeed, for many weeks to come—nothing was talked of in Northbourne but the return of Potts' uncle from Australia. The poultry-farmer was congratulated on every hand on his prospective good fortune, and he and his wife were the objects of divers small attentions;

the village, it seemed, had suddenly awoke to the excellencies and perfections of their glum-visaged neighbour. Moreover, the

many of the smaller farmers, being imbued with a desire for improving their knowledge of the subject. Naturally Potts was consulted, and incidentally the expert disposed of a large portion of his stock at fairly remunerative prices.

The course of a week brought the following postcard from Jabez Potts, late of Australia, which, before being delivered, was committed to memory by Bill Waggett—

“The Grand Hotel, London,  
“14th May.

“MY DEAR NEPHEW,—

“I hope to see you very shortly, but the investment of my wealth takes me all my time. Let me know if I can be of any service to you or any of your friends. My love to Maria, who, I hope, does not object to wearing diamonds.—Your affectionate uncle, JABEZ POTTS.

“P.S.—The air in London is not near so bracing as at the goldfields.”

“Poor Uncle Jabe,” sighed the poultry-farmer in the hearing of Waggett, who lingered as usual; “at his time o’ life he must need the most bracing air. And that Maria should come to diamonds!”

He shook his head reflectively and sighed again, the incident being duly recounted at the shop ere Bill set out on his return journey to Alcester.

From that day forward Northbourne could not do enough for Potts or his wife, who, though refusing nothing, seemed profoundly mystified by such evidences of good-will. Fair, of the Manor Farm, insisted on lending the poultry-keeper a horse and cart during a temporary visit of Potts’ dilapidated van to the wheelwright’s. Mrs. Clegg, the wife of the gardener at the Hall, was equally zealous in forcing her sewing-machine upon the lady of “The Bower,” who so flagrantly misused it that it never worked satisfactorily again.

Each week there came a postcard—the all but universal use of the postcard as the sole means of communication, so Potts assured Bill Waggett, was one of the democratic features of Australian life—with references to present wealth and past life upon the goldfields which filled Northbourne with envy and admiration. For



“Listen to this, gentlemen all.”

place seemed possessed with a sudden interest in fowls and their scientific management; the majority of the cottagers, together with

the Pottses the days passed pleasantly enough, but as time wore on, misgiving began to temper the more generous feelings that of late had expanded so many of the villagers' hearts. The rich Australian, though a regular, if economical, correspondent, did not materialise, somewhat to the alarm of Lock, at the shop, who had given the poultry-farmer unlimited credit; of Stubbins, at "The Beehive," who had assured Potts that he should always regard both him and his uncle as privileged guests at his inn; of George Borrell, of "The Plough and Bottle," who, not to be outdone by his rival, had sent a case of assorted spirits to "The Bower." A tardy generosity, too, had warmed the hearts of Slipper, of the Glebe Farm, and Wales, of Notgrove, which, in the case of each, had taken the form of a loan of ten pounds to Samuel Potts, with a hope that he would defer repayment to such a time as might suit his convenience, and, like many others who had forced their favours upon the tenants of "The Bower," the warmth of their generosity was cooling daily.

As was natural, some rays of reflected glory had fallen upon George Horspool, who shared in a minor degree the favours showered upon his employer. Many were the questions he had to answer, many were the nugs of beer he drained at another's paying in the taproom of "The Beehive" or "The Plough and Bottle."

It was in the latter hostelry, late one summer evening, that there fell the bolt from the blue which was to spread panic through Northbourne. There were, perhaps, a dozen in the taproom that eventful evening, and the first of these to rise from the bench against the wall and stagger to the door was George Horspool, who had to start betimes the next morning on his weekly journey to London.

"You've dropped summat, George!" cried Josiah Gollup. "You've dropped summat, I tell'ee, George Horspool. Do'ee pick it up, Joseph Chell, and run after him with it."

As the door swung to, Chell rose from the bench at his elder's bidding, blundered across the room, and from the mat picked up a postcard.

"Let's see it, Joe," said the landlord. "Ah! he's got one of old Potts's cards; so he has, the nasty thief! I'll just take it up to 'The Bower' myself at closing-time. Sam Potts naturally don't want his private correspondence dropped about the village."

Chell handed the card to the innkeeper, who could not deny himself a glance at the

back; unlike his rival Stubbins, he had never had a sight of the Australian's writing. As he looked, his cheeks went white, and he stepped from behind the counter into the middle of the taproom.

"What is it?" asked Clegg, Squire Sparkett's gardener, as Borrell held the card beneath the lamp. For close on a minute the question went unanswered, and then the landlord ran his eye along the row of wondering faces that were raised to his.

"Listen to this, gentlemen all," said he in a voice heavy with indignation. "Listen to this and mark the date, this being the 9th of June."

"The Grand Hotel, London,  
10th June.

"MY DEAR SAMUEL,

"This is to thank you for your last and to say how I appreciate the kindness of those friendly neighbours you speak of. I long to settle down among such congenial surroundings. My business is just upon finished and I'm in hopes to pay you a visit very shortly. My love to dear Maria.—Your affectionate Uncle, JABEZ.

"P.S.—I may arrive quite unexpected."

Dead silence followed the reading; the *habitues* of "The Plough and Bottle" gaped at their host.

"Well," ejaculated Gollup vacantly.

"'Well,' you say—'well,' Josiah Gollup," retorted the innkeeper, with fine contempt. "You see nothing in this 'ere, and it's no more than might be expected. But it strikes me this ways. Here's one of these postcards, with a clean stamp upon it, addressed to Sam Potts and dated the 10th, which is to-morrow, dropped on the evening of the 9th in this very house by that Horspool, who goes up to London once a week regular."

He looked round the room, to meet an ominous nod from the gardener.

"What it comes to is this," he continued authoritatively. "I don't believe one single word of this uncle, nor them goldfields, nor Australia neither. It's all moonshine, swank; Potts has written these cards hisself, and that Horspool has posted 'em week by week up in London. Plain enough, ain't it?"

"As the nose on your face, George Borrell," assented Clegg, as he took the card. "Longing to settle down among congenial surroundings, is 'e? I'd like to settle 'im. Dear Maria, too, who's played the dickens and all with my missus' 'Singer.'"

"And may arrive unexpected," added the innkeeper darkly. "Well, I fancy as 'ow

'e may, just to prove there's some truth in these cards of 'is. I tell you what, Mr. Clegg, instead of going to Potts's, I'll just step down to Fair's place and give 'im a bit o' my mind, not forgetting to stop at that Horspool's and let 'im 'ave what 'e's dropped, as though I picked it up outside 'is cottage."

The next day but one brought the weekly postcard from the gold-digger, the contents of which were, as usual, public property long before being somewhat carelessly perused by the addressee. Potts had much on his hands that Thursday, a large consignment of birds having been brought back by Horspool from London the preceding afternoon, and was busy with his henchman in putting up additional houses for their accommodation. He passed a busy morning, as did others in Northbourne, in chief the landlord of "The Plough and Bottle," Stephen Fair, of the Manor Farm, and Stubbins, of "The Beehive."

About four in the afternoon Fair's trap drove up the village, its occupants being the farmer, George Borrell, and a loosely built stranger, sun-tanned, bluff of manner, and clad in habiliments which might have put a stage bookmaker to the blush. The party took its way through the village at a leisurely trot, pulled up for a short ten minutes at "The Plough and Bottle," where the unknown's vermilion tie, chessboard raiment, and festive bearing were the admiration of an interested gathering, and then made on up the hill towards "The Bower." It so chanced that Maria Potts was standing in the front garden when the trap drew up at her gate.

"Good afternoon, Mrs. Potts!" cried Fair, springing down from the driver's seat. "I've got a pleasant surprise for you here. Who d'yer think this is? Where's Sam?"

The lady came hurrying down the path with heightening colour, to meet with a boisterous greeting from the stranger.

"What? You don't know me, Maria; me, your old Uncle Jabe? Why, blest if I shouldn't have known you anywhere, my dear!"

He saluted Mrs. Potts vigorously on either cheek and smiled benignly at his surroundings.

"But Uncle Jabez," stammered the woman, released from contact with his stubbly chin, "Sam and I hadn't set eyes on each other when you left for the goldfields."

"No more you had, to be sure; I was forgetting," came the unabashed rejoinder. "The fact is, I've so many nephews and nieces in one place or——"

He stopped abruptly as his companions scowled.

"Sam said as he was your only nephew."

"So he is, my dear," replied the Australian breezily; "leastways, the only one I cares a pin about. Why, if that ain't him a-coming up the path! I should have known——"

Maria Potts laughed.

"No, that's only George, uncle. George, go and tell the guv'nor I've got a surprise for him."

Within a minute Samuel Potts, dust-stained and in his shirt-sleeves, appeared round the corner of the house.

"Hang you and your surprises, Maria! Here am I busy——"

His anger died and speech suddenly failed him at the sight of his visitors, more especially of the third in garments as chequered as his own career.

"It's Uncle Jabez!" cried Mrs. Potts, with an excitement that proclaimed her innocence. "To think that he should see you in such a state!"

The poultry-farmer would have turned tail, but Borrell gave him no chance as he winked at the stranger.

"Why, Sam," cried the latter, with an effusiveness that struck a chill to his relative's heart, "don't put yourself about on my account. I'll soon get used to your ways, and you'll soon be used to mine."

He gripped his nephew by the hand, slapping him dramatically upon the shoulder, and at once suggested refreshment for himself and the two gentlemen who had given him a lift from the station. Samuel Potts returned the greeting without enthusiasm, yet could not ignore the suggestion. His cheeks were grey as the sleeves of his ragged shirt, his smile was ghastly. He muttered something about the pleasure of the occasion, followed by a feeble inquiry as to Australia. Mrs. Potts was warmer in her welcome, and inquired after her uncle's luggage, which was immediately produced from the cart and carried into the house; as luggage it was scarcely imposing, being no more than a very dilapidated, if weighty, portmanteau. The poultry-farmer looked on aghast, speechless for helplessness and horror, and seized the opportunity of an adjournment into the cottage to hurry away in the direction of the outbuildings.

Whisky and soda having been produced, Maria Potts set about preparing tea for the guests, for Fair and the innkeeper seemed in no way inclined to leave the wealthy Colonial. It was then that Messrs. Stubbins and Clegg

dropped in, as they said, to pay their respects to the millionaire, who by this time had succeeded in negotiating a loan of three pounds from his niece, saying that his cheque-book was in his portmanteau, and that he wished to send down to the inn for a certain brand of cigars which were not to be had in London. A substantial tea appeared in due course, the *pièce de résistance* being a ham procured from the shop, for which Mrs. Lock, by the way, had insisted on immediate payment. The meal had hardly begun when Lock himself and Josiah Gollup put in an appearance; the affair, in fact, was fast approaching the proportions of a reception, which was only marred by the protracted absence of the master of "The Bower."

Not that the principal guest paid the smallest heed to the matter. His niece's conduct was all that an uncle's heart could desire, and his interest in "the friendly neighbours" was keen; unfortunately he preferred whisky to tea, a fact which Maria set down to a Colonial life, and, the spirit inspiring his generous impulses, he announced his intention of making an indefinite stay, assuring his hearers that he was bent on helping his nephew in his business, and adding that he would scorn to be a sleeping partner in a concern to the development of which his capital would be devoted.

Thereupon Borrell had made a bid for a couple of dozen of the newly arrived fowls, and a deal was promptly arranged, the Antipodean taking credit to himself for so early associating himself with his nephew's interests. Mrs. Potts smiled benignly as others followed the innkeeper's lead, and the latest addition to the stock-in-trade was disposed of readily at fancy figures. She felt that Uncle Jabez was a born salesman—in short, a financial genius, and the promptitude of his methods all but took her breath away. Gorgeous and bronzed, if none too cleanly a figure, he sat there in his blatant suit and disposed of his nephew's goods at swingeing prices, insisting more-over on the purchases being removed forthwith, if willing to waive the necessity of payment until the following day, though always after consultation with his niece as to the buyer's financial stability.

The party then adjourned to the paddock at the back of the cottage, where one or two of the purchasers began transferring their property to friends in the road, which was thronged with villagers, with here and there a cart or barrow among them. Even Maria Potts thought the proceedings extraordinary.

At her side stood her relative in a state that did honour to her sense of hospitality, surveying the scene with flushed yet impassive features; scattered over the field were the others, securing their purchases, shouts and laughter all but drowning the terrified clucking and squalling of the fowls. Within the next minute, however, a sudden hush fell upon the paddock as a heated, vociferating figure emerged from the cottage.

"What's the meaning of this, Maria?" panted Samuel Potts, who had been down to the village in fruitless quest of Constable Churn.

"Uncle's been doing a stroke of business for you, Sam," cried his wife.

"Business? Pretty business!" gasped the poultry-farmer, with an agonised glance about him at his rapidly disappearing property, at the shouting throng in the road.

"You ain't no uncle o' mine!" he roared, catching sight of the central figure. "You're some loafing, haymaking scoundrel that them two have rigged out!" For a moment the poultry-farmer stood speechless as he watched his neighbours helping themselves. "Hi, Fair! what are you a-doing with them coops? Gollup, you thief! what are you after with that ladder? George Borrell, I'll have the law of you!"

"You've got ten pounds o' mine!" retorted Fair, as he lifted Potts's property on to the tailboard of his cart.

"And a precious long score at my inn!" shouted Borrell; "but your Uncle Jabe will see you through."

It was then that the nephew struck his uncle a violent blow upon the nose. The ex-gold-digger blinked dazedly beneath the assault and rubbed his injured organ.

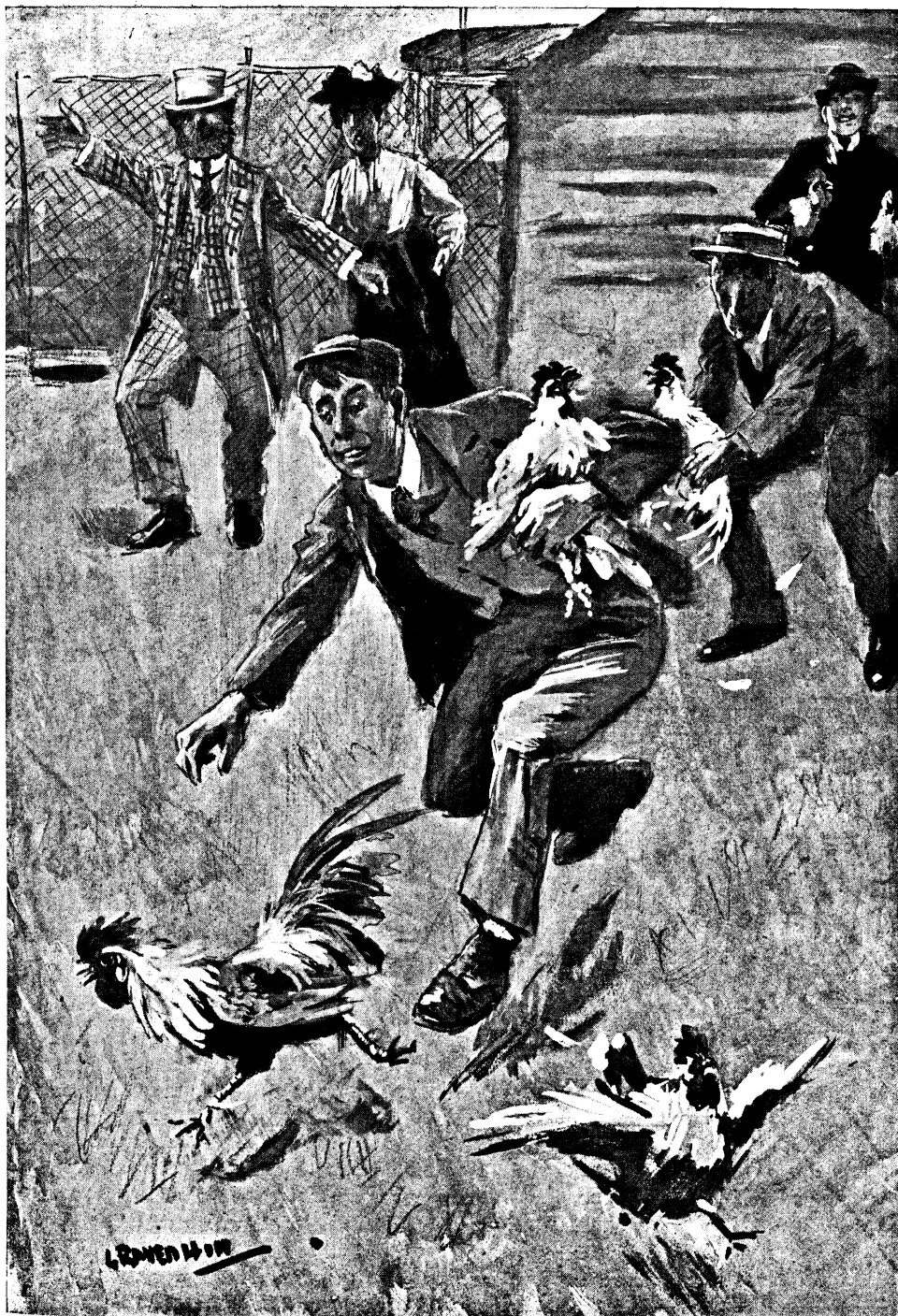
"What! Hit your poor old uncle!" he murmured, tears of reproach in his eyes—"your good Uncle Jabe, what's going to leave you his money? And before the neighbours, too? I wash my hands of you, Sam Potts."

He spoke with vinous dignity, and then a sudden change came over the impostor.

"Wash my hands of you?" he cried in a sudden fury at the breach of hospitality. "I'll set about you, you scoundrel, that's what I'll do!"

The next moment the poultry-farmer had collapsed among the ruins of a coop, and it was with difficulty that the indignant Colonial was dragged from off his prostrate relative.

Then, with all the honours of war, the



"Shouts and laughter all but drowning the terrified clucking and squalling of the fowls."



*soi-disant* uncle was escorted through the village to the Manor Farm, where, after being stripped of his gorgeous raiment, his own clothes were restored to him with a solatium of half-a-crown. But he had not done with his relative, who had so wantonly outraged

the canons of hospitality. Two nights later a fowlhouse of Potts's was raided by hay-makers, and the culprits, of which "Mr. Jabez Potts" was one, got clear away with a dozen of his nephew's much diminished stock.



"I'll set about you, you scoundrel!"

## A NURSERY FANCY.

**I**F I should die and go away thro' all the trembling stars  
 And right behind the silver moon that shines in rifts and bars  
 And get to Heaven very late, long after prayers were said,  
 Then God would send an angel nurse to put me into bed.  
 I could not go to sleep at all, nor even close my eyes,  
 Not even if they sang to me and gave me two mince-pies,  
 I'd sit right up in bed and say—(it would not be a sin)  
 "Please, Angel Nursie, I can't sleep till mother tucks me in."

ARCHIBALD SULLIVAN.



"CHRISTMAS-TIME." BY W. DENDY SADLER.

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## THE PICTURES OF MR. W. DENDY SADLER.

BY AUSTIN CHESTER.

SOME years ago we had the pleasure of reproducing for our readers a number of pictures, chosen from the works of one of the most popular of modern artists, Mr. Dendy Sadler. Not only were we then unable, for reasons of space, to present more than a selection from the artist's work, but since then Mr. Sadler has added so largely, and with such variety of invention, to his unique gallery of early nineteenth century themes that we have now persuaded him and his publishers to allow us to reproduce a further number of his pictures, chosen from those not as yet seen in our pages.—ED.

THE visitor who journeys homeward from Hemingford Grey carries with him, photographed, as it were, upon the sensitised portions of the brain, a series of pictures of the home in which Mr. Dendy Sadler lives a life full of effort and achievement, pictures that range themselves in compact groups distinct in outline.

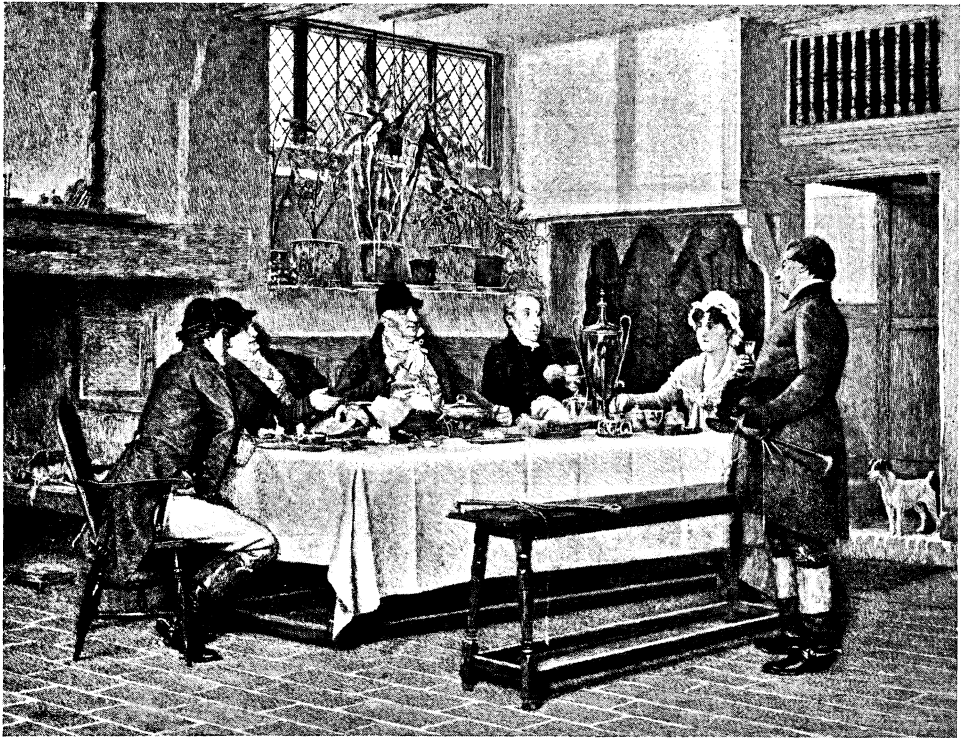
These mental pictures, which memory, with fantastic choice, selects, registers and

preserves from amongst others, equally admirable, which it as fantastically rejects, are all seen within the mellow quality of an autumn day, the glow of which, touching everything with a great lucidity, turns the sere barks of the trees to rose and grey. The distinguishing atmosphere of this sleepy hollow in Huntingdonshire is the peculiarly tranquil air, as of immense age, "older than how many generations of men's lives?" which seems part of the spirit of life in Nature electing to withhold any too precipitate revelation of how it performs its wise, maturing work.

Here a nest of apple trees, fretted and twisted by time and weather into every conceivable caprice of form, from which the load of ruddy fruit has just been garnered, stands forth for review. There stretches a time-worn

terrace with moss-grown stone coping, high above a pond, the surface of which is covered by the large leaves and starry flowers of the water-lily. Yonder a lawn slopes gently to the Ouse, in the dark waters of which is reflected the Saxon church which, externally at least, has been but little altered since the days when its rude structure was raised rather by reverent hands than by architectural rule. To add to the enchantment of this last scene, the modern art of landscape-gardening has been called

first planted a garden," that it is indeed the purest of human pleasures, the greatest refreshment to the spirit of man. With George Gissing, in "The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft," Mr. Sadler feels "The garden flowers I care for are the quite old-fashioned roses, sunflowers, hollyhocks, lilies, and so on, and these I like to see growing as much as possible as if they were wild." Therefore there are the tall, primrose-coloured, single hollyhocks, the equally tall orange sunflowers, turning their heads



"THE HUNTING MORN." BY W. DENDY SADLER.

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upon to perform its decorative task, and the pink blooms of the hydrangeas, planted in big tubs, against the background of a thatched boat-house, over which the *vitis cognita* climbs, give a touch of vivid colour at exactly the right spot.

And then the garden! Turn in it which way you will, each view reveals that Mr. Dendy Sadler, like Wordsworth, sees the beautiful quality in common things. As I paced its walks in the golden sunlight of the still day, on the far verge of autumn, it was to feel with Francis Bacon that "God Almighty

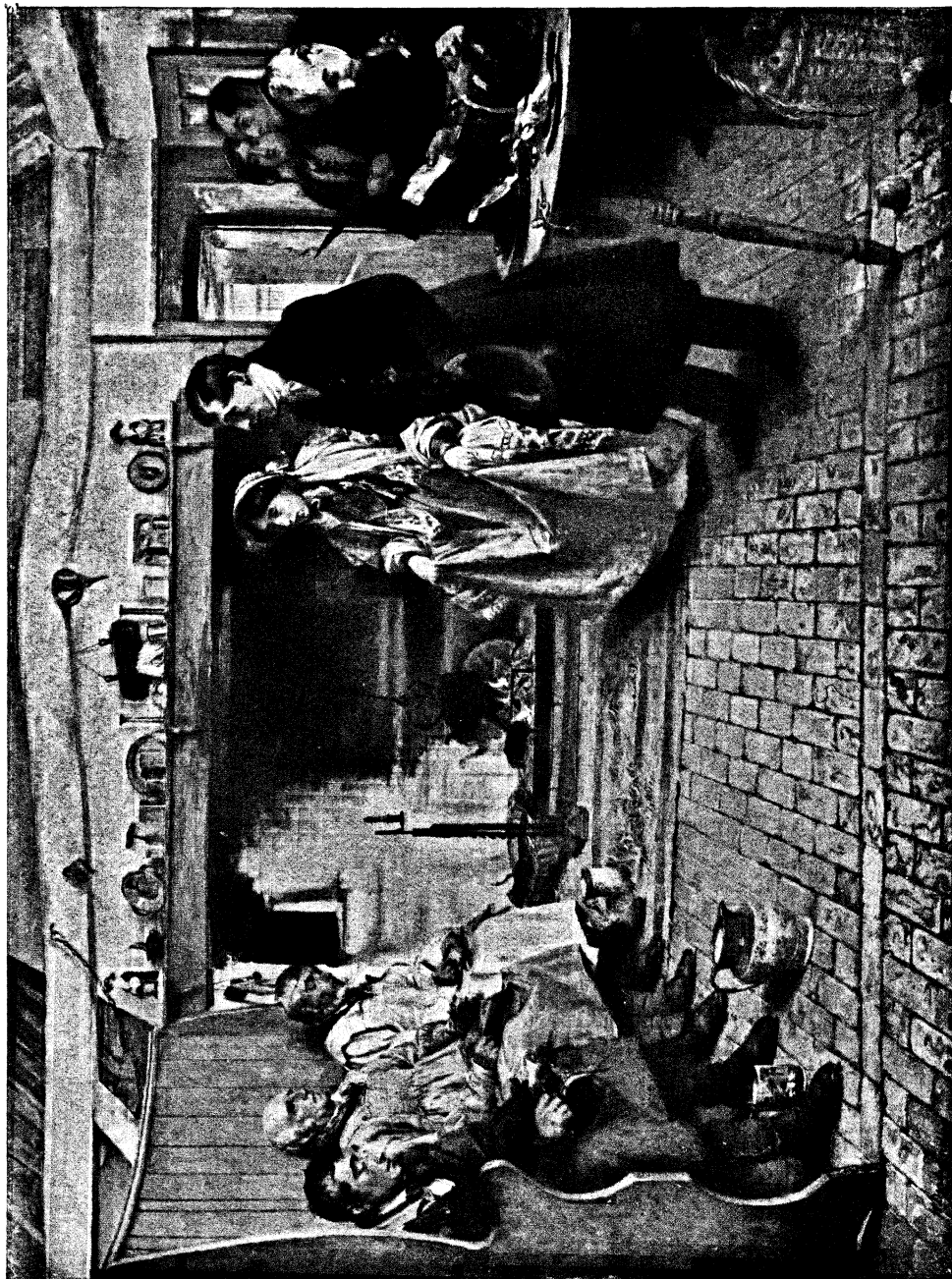
towards the god of their idolatry, the Sweet Williams and similarly homely flowers, sweet and sightly. Although for the main garden the owner does not deny "there should be some fair alleys, some pretty tufts of fruit trees, and arbours with seats set in some decent order; but these to be by no means set too thick, but to leave the main garden so as it be not close, but the air open and free."

To while away the tedium of my journey back to town I borrowed from Mr. Sadler a book, entitled "At Large," written by a man who has a sense of nearness to Nature's



"THE OLD FOLKS AT HOME." BY W. DENDY SADLER.

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"THE POPULAR CANDIDATE." BY W. DENDY SADLER.

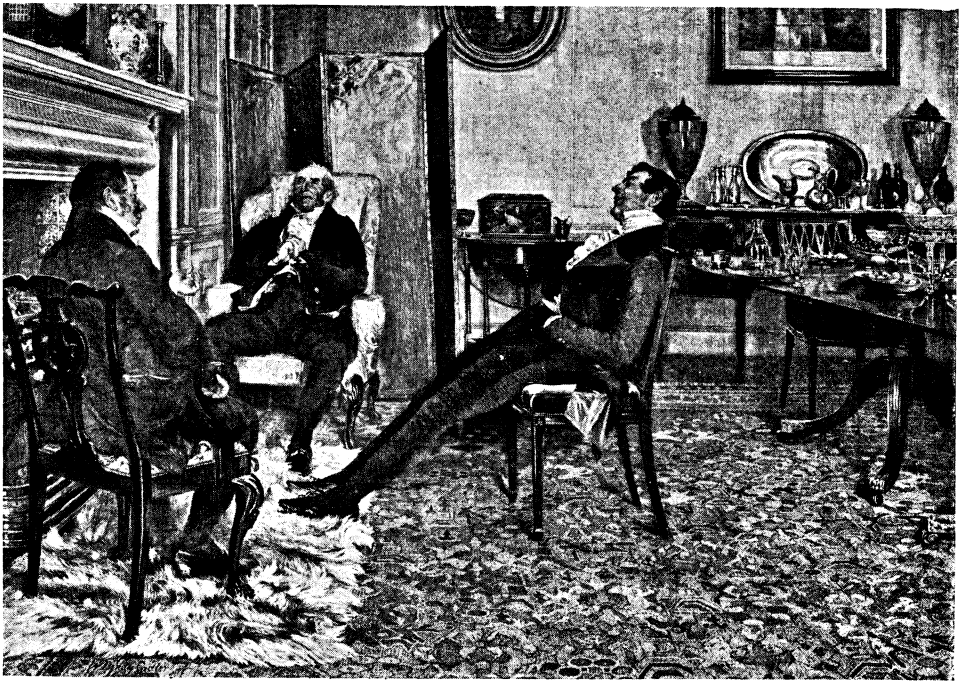
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secrets, that was lying upon his hall-table. So much better than I could, does Mr. Arthur Christopher Benson describe the beauty and the stillness and the associations of this special Huntingdonshire village, so appreciatively does he walk its paths, so imbued is he with the largeness of the peace which envelops it, so delightfully does he endow it with a sense of verbal colour, that I give way to the temptation to filch from his pages the following paragraph from the essay "A Midsummer's Day Dream":—

"And so we came at last to our goal ; a

the pilgrim it seems an enchanted place, where there can be no care or sorrow, nothing hard, or unlovely, or unclean, but a sort of fairy-land, where men seem to be living the true and beautiful life of the soul, of which we are always in search, but which seems to be so strangely hidden away. It must have been for me that the wise and kindly artist, who lives there in a paradise of flowers, had filled his trellises with climbing roses, and bidden the tall larkspurs raise their azure spires in the air. How else had he brought it all to such perfection for that golden hour ?



"AFTER DINNER, REST AWHILE." BY W. DENDY SADLER.

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house embowered in leaves, a churchyard beside the water, and a church that seemed to have almost crept to the brink to see itself mirrored in the stream. The place mortals call Hemingford Grey, but it had a new name for me that day which I cannot even spell—for the perennial difficulty that survives a hundred disenchantments is to feel that a romantic hamlet seen thus on a day of pilgrimage, with its clustering roofs and chimneys, its waterside lawns, is a real place at all. I suppose that people there live dull and simple lives enough, buy and sell, gossip and backbite, wed and die ; but for

Perhaps he did not even guess that he had done it all for my sake, which made it so much more gracious a gift. And then we learned, too, from a little red-bound volume which I had thought before was a guide-book, but which turned out to-day to be a volume of the Book of Life, that the whole place was alive with the calling of old voices. At the little church there across the meadows the portly, tender-hearted, generous Charles James Fox had wedded his bride. Here, in the pool below, Cowper's dog had dragged out for him the yellow water-lily that he could not reach ; and in the church itself





"MEMORIES." BY W. DENDY SADLER.

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"COUNTRY CLIENTS." BY W. DENDY SADLER.

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was a little slab where two tiny maidens sleep, the sisters of the famous Miss Gunnings who set all hearts ablaze by their beauty, who married dukes and earls, and had spent their sweet youth in a little ruined manor-house hard by. I wonder whether, after all, the two little girls, who died in the time of roses, had not the better part; and whether the great duchess, who showed herself so haughty to poor Boswell, when he led his great dancing bear through the grim North, did not think sometimes in her state of the childish sisters with whom she had played, before they came to be laid in the cool chancel beside the slow stream."

This quotation illustrates the place's power to influence our thoughts, shows how some gracious magic descends upon our mental vision to transmute memory into sight, and how, as Mr. Benson says, the whole place is "alive with the calling of old voices."

The Manor-house of which he writes is just outside Mr. Dendy Sadler's gate. It holds other and further back memories than those of the Gunnings, for it was once the house of rest for monks of Ely, or of Crowland, travelling perhaps between those places and Cambridge or the Golden Borough. The modern windows and the filled-in frontage round the chimney-stacks faded

from before my eyes, and I seemed to see lancet-openings, and the old cross which marked the holy character of the occupants, niched within the more modern bricks. The unknowable, the non-existent come to life and the valiant dead whisper encouragement to him whose race is not yet finished. Here of a certainty did Cromwell ride and walk; here, too, the ripe fruits of imagination

suggest that the brave Hereward was once to be seen in all his incomparable assurance, his irrational, boastful inconsistencies, shrouded in the dignity of a hopeless cause.

These thoughts take us far from the subject of our article, but it would be little less unsuitable to devote *all* our space to Mr. Sadler's surroundings than to dismiss them as inconsiderable, for they have a way of creating personality, and he owes to them perhaps something of the mellow quality which

of late has shown itself to be so distinguishing a mark of his work.

In our former article we told, in Mr. Dendy Sadler's own words, of the conditions of life which actually helped to form his taste in subject, if not in art: "We were a behind-the-times people," he said, "and our surroundings were in harmony with us. Substantial meals, with home-made wines and home-



"MY LOVE TO YOU!" BY W. DENDY SADLER.

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brewed beers, satisfied our ideas of hospitality; long sittings after dinner, with nuts and wine set on the beautifully polished table, with later adjournment to the drawing-room and *vingt-et-un*, or to the smoking-room, where long clay churchwarden pipes, spirit-stands, and hot and cold water were to be found. These were the customs of a select local society in the old-fashioned town of Horsham in which we lived—customs which properly pertained, not to the early 'sixties, in which I remember them, but to some thirty or forty years before."

It is therefore as a student of the manners of the great middle-class of the early nineteenth century, that we must consider Mr. Dendy Sadler. He is the exponent of a people who lived by rule and by rote, and thought the thoughts befitting the average well-to-do man; and since Mr. Dendy Sadler is above all an observer of

of a life in which to stand still for a moment is to lose points in the game, upon the material comfort enjoyed by those who knew how to use leisure, and who made no demands upon excitement; and we are grateful for being shown the homespun dignity which the traditions of an earlier and more contented generation brought to surround the artist in his youth.

Long since, Mr. Dendy Sadler left the Horsham of his description and, after a stay at Düsseldorf of six years—at which art-centre the teaching tended towards exactitude of method, familiar to us under the generic title of "the Dutch school"—and twenty years' residence in London, went to make his home in the beautiful Huntingdonshire village of Hemingford Grey.

In our previous article we told of his *début* in paint, and of how success attended him



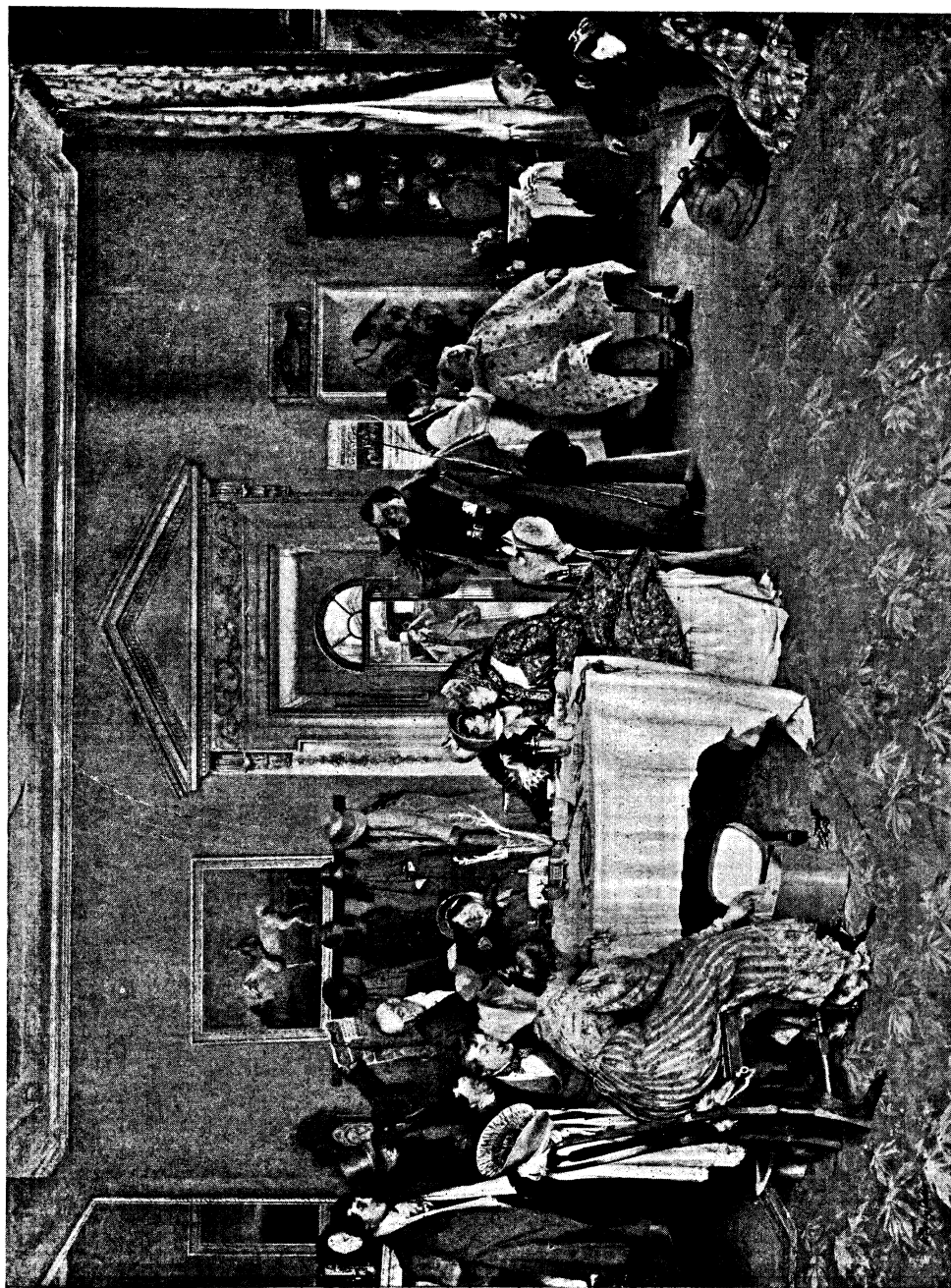
"SAME TO YOU, DEAR!" BY W. DENDY SADLER.

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character, it is natural that even in his "unpractical infancy," surrounded by these people whom both in words and in paint he so graphically describes, he should have had an open ear and a quick eye. And it is to our benefit that what he saw of those subtle differences that make for large divergences, he remembered to his good use. It is especially pleasant to us to look back from the hurry

at the very outset of his career. We considered how, imperturbably kind, he, whilst constantly betraying that he is alive to the cynicism of life, is careful never to show its hiding-places. Rather does he intentionally make the end and aim of his art to be the illustration of some whimsical or human interest which never intrudes upon the domain of vulgarity.





"LONDON TO YORK." BY W. DENDY SADLER.

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"A SUMMER'S DAY." BY W. DENDY SADLER.

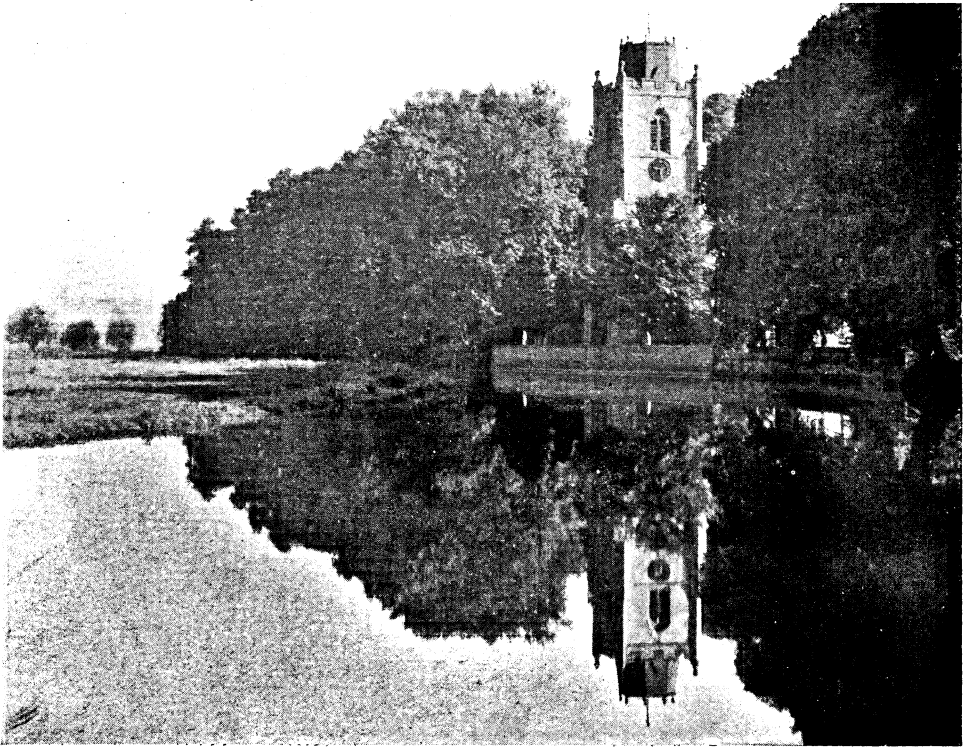
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We lingered over his notable sense of the essentials of story-telling, in that he never misses a point. We said how ably he deals with the qualities of jealousy, rivalry, geniality, and love, making of them, as it were, the primary colours of his palette, and how, although here and there he brands and gibbets selfishness and self-indulgence, he seems to perform even this task with a smile. But the subjects of illustration were of the most varied of Mr. Dendy Sadler's works, chosen to give a bird's-eye view of his talent's catholicity—*i.e.*, canvases filled with

ardour with the appearances of middle age, this is one of the privileges of Mr. Dendy Sadler's art; and he so represents the sentiment of love in advanced life that he surrounds it with the freshness of sensation which is assumed only to be the accompaniment of adolescence. Here he hawks within a limited area, perhaps, but never does he make a false cast.

Here are the love stories of people who would have to bend very considerably were they to try to throw the balance of their years on youth's side. In proving it



HEMINGFORD GREY CHURCH.

*From a photograph by Miss Dendy Sadler.*

a multitude of figures, such as "The Plaintiff and the Defendant," "The Bagman's Toast," "A Day in the Country," "In the Camp of the Amalekites," "Thursday," "Friday," "A Pegged-Down Fishing Match," and "Chorus." Thus it happened that we omitted to touch upon one of the most distinguishing features of his art—that feeling of sentiment circling entirely round old age, which betrays how impressed the artist is by the charm of constancy in affection. To carry on the feelings of youth into full maturity, to combine the young man's

possible to make the emotions of middle age interesting, Mr. Dendy Sadler has dared to essay an experiment in paint which few authors in words have ever attempted.

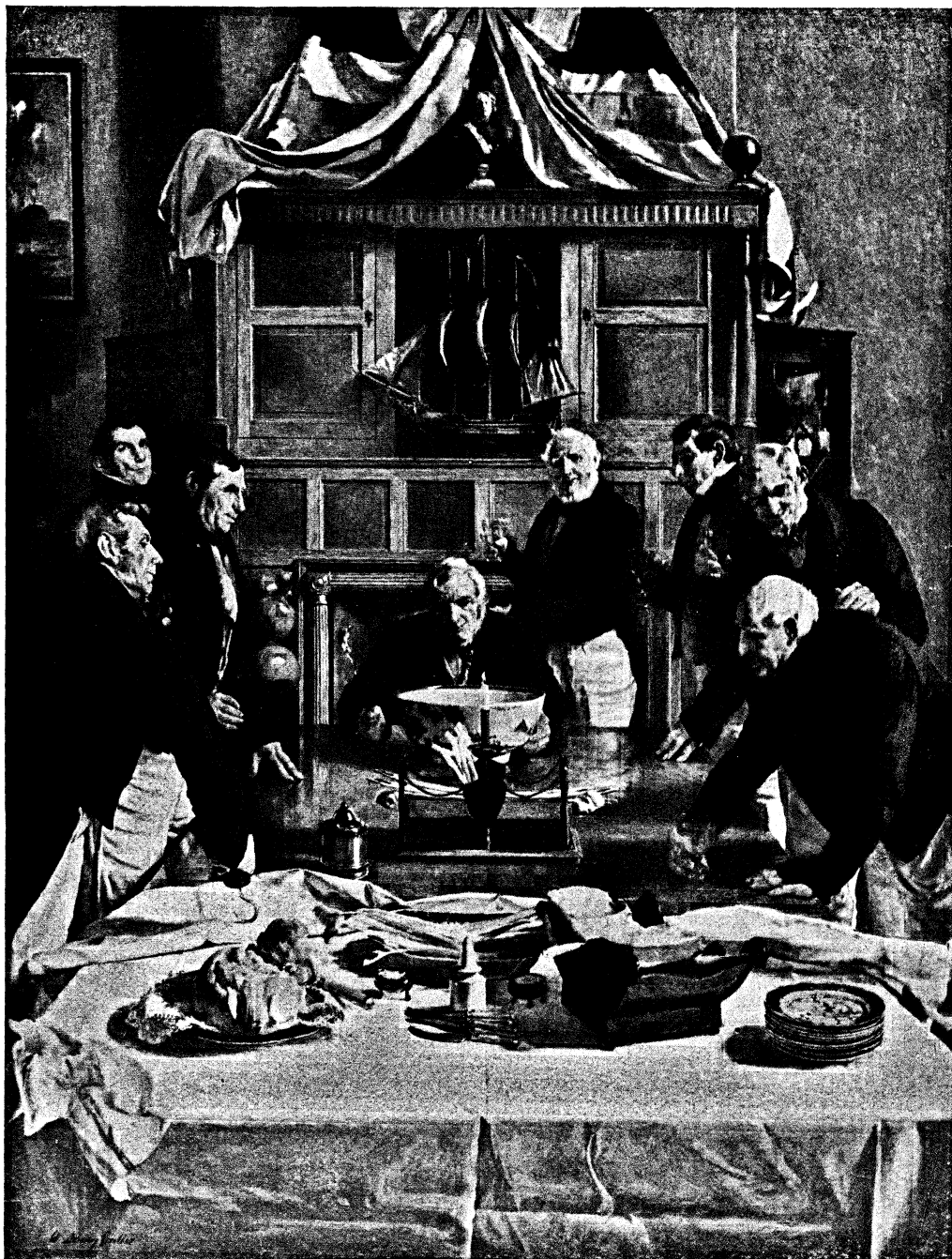
True it is that Shakespeare wrote his "Antony and Cleopatra" round a Cleopatra of thirty-nine, but Shakespeare has no parallel; and few of our early novelists chose heroines who were far out of their teens. Nor has the novelist of to-day been much more venturesome.

Before we leave the pictures of sentiment, there is another view of old age to which



"WHEN THE HEART WAS YOUNG." BY W. DENDY SADLER.

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"THE SKIPPER'S BIRTHDAY." BY W. DENDY SADLER.

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allusion must be made, one to which Mr. Dendy Sadler shows himself peculiarly awake, and that is its relation to the younger generation—the protective, indulgent, yet weighted-with-authority attitude so admirably shown in “For Weal or Woe,” “Home, Sweet Home,” “The Dower,” “As the Years Roll By,” “The Old and the Young,” “The Christening,” “Constancy,” and “For All Time.”

To the series of scenes of business life belong “The New Will,” telling plainly its

The historical painter depicts a scene the understanding of which depends either upon a written description and a catalogue or on memory of costume and period; the “*genre*” painter is expected to be a depicter of scenes of ordinary life, domestic, rural or village, and Mr. Dendy Sadler claims to be recognised as a *genre* painter. But he is something more, because his work embodies suggestions that experience tells us how to supplement, suggestions which are, indeed, like tales, susceptible to progression and to



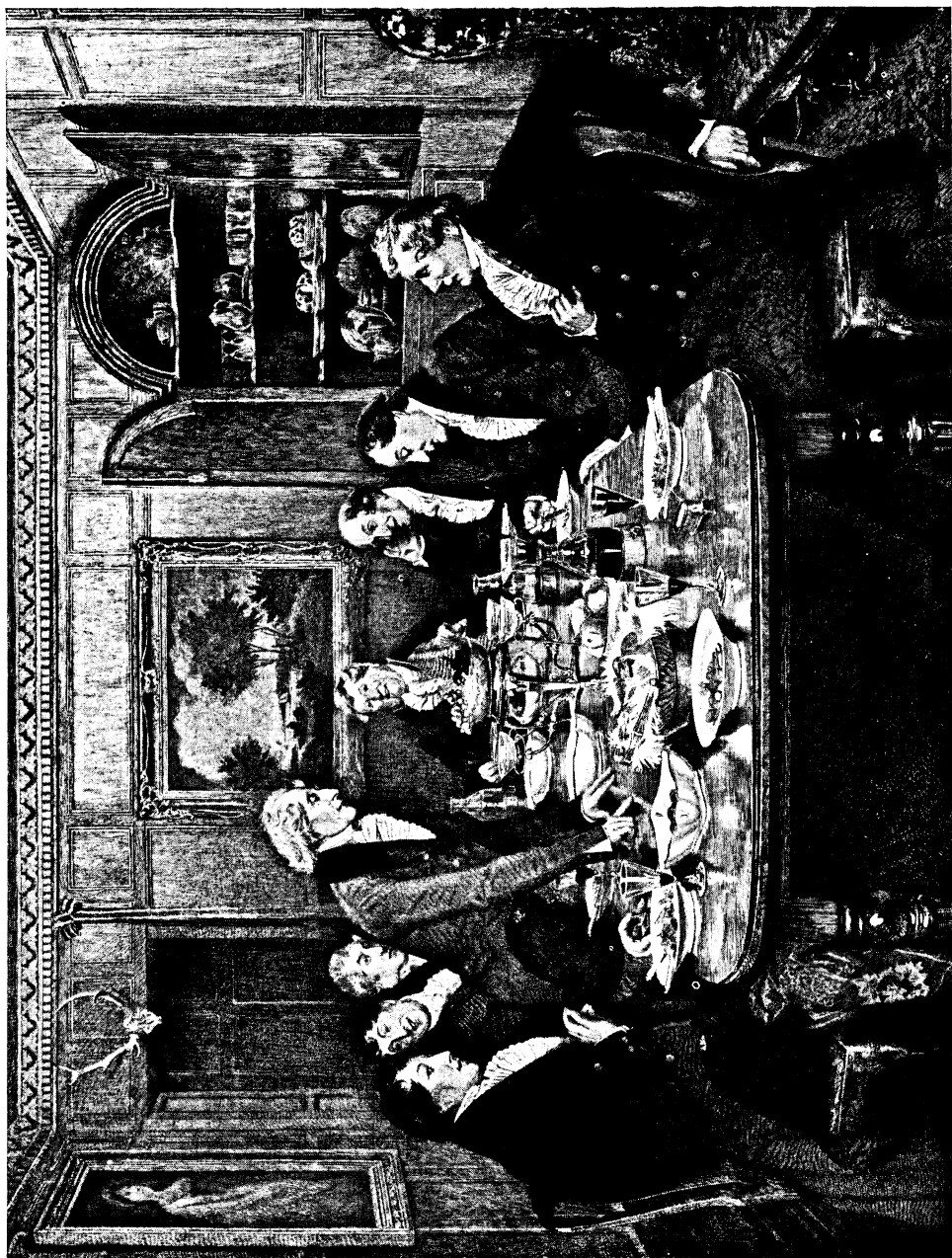
MR. W. DENDY SADLER IN HIS STUDIO.

*From a photograph by Elliott & Fry.*

story of the recently taken second wife; “A Breach of Promise,” to which equally no words of description are necessary. “Country Clients,” “Marriage by Registrar,” “The Right of Way,” “A Little Mortgage,” “The Lawyer” (looking for a lost document), are each full of observation of character, turned to so interesting an account that we should be inclined to say that Mr. Dendy Sadler is the only modern artist who has managed to make legal affairs of interest, did we not remember, as readers of the WINDSOR MAGAZINE have special cause to do, how Mr. Anthony Hope wrote one of his most delightful stories about a disputed path.

retrogression by the onlooker, who is brought by the artist, with genuine dexterity, into collaboration.

Thus, to “The Top of the Hill” we bring foreknowledge that it is a very hot day, and that the climb has been considerable; in “Home-brewed” we assume that the men about to taste the landlord’s cheer hold themselves good judges of the beverage’s quality; to “For He’s a Jolly Good Fellow!” we credit the suggestion that the man sitting with his back to us has accomplished some deed which has made his seven friends feast him. Similarly we allow that “The Popular Candidate,” canvassing for votes, depends, for their securing, rather upon his wife’s prettiness



“RETURNING THANKS.” BY W. DENDY SADLER.

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"HIS WEDDING MORN." BY W. DENDY SADLER.

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than on his own eloquence. In "His Wedding Morn" we feel the nervous fingers, the fear of being late, see the failure, again and yet again, of the groom to complete his toilette, in the mass of discarded neckcloths on the room's floor, and later, in sympathy,

we accompany him as he hastens up to the altar-rails. In "When the Heart was Young" we lose sight of the old couple, tolerant of their youth's fondness, and recreate in our imagination a vision of them as boy and girl lovers, employed in the task of





"SIMON THE CELLARER." BY W. DENDY SADLER.

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cutting into the tree's bark the design of the emblematic heart.

In looking at "The Disappointed Anglers" we again can imagine the dragging steps with which the fishermen, drenched to the skin, have walked from the river to the inn, and we as certainly know that their depression will be relieved, and that they may even forgive the cat for eating up their only catch,

when they have quaffed of the contents of the Toby-jug which the landlady is bringing into the parlour.

In the same way we follow the suggestions put forward by "The Hunting Morn" as the huntsman tells the group of sportsmen, of whom the local parson is one, of the most likely coverts in which Reynard may be found, and of the probabilities of the day's good



"HABET!" BY W. DENDY SADLER.

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sport ; almost we can see the expectant tails of the compact and level pack waving ; sniff the humid air of the November morning, and hear the whip's authoritative objurcations to Rattler, Ranger, Trueman, Trusty, Woodman, and the rest. "Over the Nuts and Wine" so graphically marks the comfortable hour of friendly argument that we take our

part in the discussion of the proceedings against Queen Caroline, in some anecdote of the Duke of York and Mrs. Fitzherbert, or, maybe, listen to the retailing of some particulars of Lord Castlereagh's suicide, which astonished the world in the early 'twenties. In looking at "The Skipper's Birthday," a picture originally entitled

"Nelson Relics," it is not hard for us to divine that the men who are drinking the old sea-dog's health are the remnant of those who fought with him in the *Victory*, the model of which ship has, draped above it, one of the flags that once waved from a masthead of the famous vessel itself.

And in no case does the drama which Mr. Dendy Sadler asks us to help create make an exorbitant demand on our credulity. Never under his brush does conviviality run to licence, although wine and good cheer generally play a very important part among his subjects. "The Wine Committee" speaks of the critical taste of the first glass. "Here's a Health to His Majesty!" rings with that feeling of loyalty which makes us, as a people, rise instinctively to our feet and uncover our heads at the sound of the National Anthem. "The Way of the Sun," "The Last of the Bin," "The Cellar's Best," "After Dinner, Rest Awhile," "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow!" "The Night-Cap," are pictures of which the dramatic quality is excellent in kind. And, as the later work of the artist, they show that his invention, always of singular readiness and fertility, is still on the increase. All are expressive of that quality of temperate enjoyment from which much of Mr. Sadler's work derives its peculiarly wholesome savour.

One picture which, since it marks the season of the year, it is suitable we should place first in our pages, is "Christmas-Time"—not the festival of the Church, but the feast of good-fellowship of the Anglo-Saxon Yule, the annual recurrence of which is celebrated with jollities of all kinds. As we look at the three men hobnobbing in the bar-parlour with a "Here's Luck!" or "A Merry Christmas to You!" we think of the old English customs of this season, of the lighting of large candles, of the throwing upon the open hearth of the huge log, of the revels under the guidance of the Lord of Misrule or the Abbot of Unreason, of Sir Roger de Coverley, of games, of music, of conjuring, of the dipping into the lucky-bag, of Blind Man's Buff and Christmas trees, of boars' heads and barons of beef, plum-puddings and mince-pies, and bowls of punch, of houses and churches decked with holly and especially with mistletoe.

We have described something of the charm of Mr. Dendy Sadler's home and the artist's affection for it, which peculiarly marks his work, and there are probably many possessors of his pictures who will like to have pointed

out to them those subjects which belong especially to Hemingford Grey. "A Summer's Day," "When the Heart was Young," and "A Day in the Country" give views of the garden, by the side of which the sluggish Ouse, self-absorbed, intent upon its task to reach the sea, finds in monotonous pace its indolent way.

"My Love to You!" and "Same to You, Dear!" are painted from one of the low-ceiled, beautifully shaped rooms of the artist's home, and reveal cupboards from which the doors have been removed to show shelves filled with specimens of china. "After Dinner, Rest Awhile" has its comfortable setting in the dining-room of the house, and "The Dower," "The Squire," "The Parson and the Squire," "A Pipe and a Glass," "When We Were Boys Together," each are suggestive of the house or the garden in which Mr. Dendy Sadler spends his time in the employment of the art which is to him a labour of love.

Outside the house, yet still within the place's precincts, the pictures "The Harvest Home," "A Mothers' Meeting," "A Quiet Little Chat," "The Bachelor," "Hostess Mine," "The Time-Honoured Guest," and "The Wayside Inn" are still of localised interest, for they were painted in a cottage adjoining the grounds.

Mention must be made of the two specimens from the artist's mediæval mood here shown. The picture "Habet!" has an admirable title, since to catch and to hold so majestic a fish was an achievement well worthy of the praise the assembled monks are, it is plain, bestowing upon the successful angler, and it needs very little imagination to conjecture that this lordly take must have immediately preceded the sumptuous fare of a Friday's "meagre" diet. "Simon the Cellarer" is a character too well known in song to need any biography, but his portrait is most happily rendered by Mr. Sadler.

It is the practice of years that has made Mr. Dendy Sadler the experienced craftsman he is—or so we are inclined to say, until we turn to his very early pictures and realise in them, as in the work he is doing to-day, the same truthful attention to detail, the same sympathetic understanding, and the same literal and meticulous fidelity to life. These are the qualities which have enabled him to withstand the usual debasing influence of fluent production and allow of his achievements being as safe from oblivion as they are from disparagement.

# BIANCA'S DAUGHTER.

BY JUSTUS MILES FORMAN,

Author of "*The Garden of Lies*," "*Tommy Carteret*," "*The Quest*," etc.

## THE GIRL WHO WANTED TO LIVE.



THE two Blakes, father and son, shared—as they shared most of their likes and dislikes—a profound distaste for balls, and never went to them when the obligation could possibly be avoided.

In consequence it

happened that an hour after their arrival at Mrs. Cartwright's dance—that is to say, somewhat after one o'clock—they met in a doorway of the ballroom, and each, encountering the hunted, furtive look in the other's eye, began to laugh.

"I take it from your air of distress," said Creighton Blake, "that you have borne all you can bear. So have I. I'm in full retreat. Shall we go together?"

The younger man turned an apprehensive eye behind him.

"Nothing would please me more," he said, "but I have a dim recollection that I asked somebody for this next dance. I can't think who it is, but I believe it is a young person Catherine Dudley has under her wing. It was Mrs. Dudley who presented me, I know."

The two stood for a moment in the shelter of the doorway looking out over the heads of the people who were chattering together in gay little groups, or who passed by in couples and nodded to them over their shoulders. Then the younger Blake said suddenly—

"Ah, there she is, that girl of Mrs. Dudley's! She's standing over there with the Tommy Carterets and Béatrix Faring. Do you see?" He pointed a finger.

"She's a rather splendid young person, isn't she? I think I must claim my dance. By Jove, she is rather splendid! Do you know who it is she looks like? She looks like Lina Strozzi as Strozzi must have been some years ago. I wonder what her name is?"

His father did not answer immediately,

and young Blake looked up at him to see if his attention had been diverted; but the elder man was staring straight at the young woman who resembled Lina Strozzi, and the sight must have been a severe shock of some nature, for his face bore a very odd expression, a fixed look such as his son had seen there but once or twice before in all his life—and that had been in brooding moments when the man had thought himself alone.

Young Blake thought that his father must be ill; he knew that the elder man's heart was none too good, and he touched him gently on the arm, moving a step nearer in case of need; but after a moment the other turned his still face, and there was no sign of illness there, nor of any expression whatever.

"The name?" he asked. "I think the young lady's name is—Fleming. Yes, Fleming. Mrs. Dudley will be some sort of elder cousin to her, I believe. Probably she has been bringing her out."

He looked back across the brilliant room to where the slim, dark-haired girl stood talking with her friends—a number of young men had added themselves to the group now—and after a moment gave a little tired sigh and turned away.

"I won't wait," he said. "I'm hideously bored. You'll be half an hour longer at least. You might step in at my rooms when you come home. I shan't have gone to bed." He nodded and went off, and his son stood in the doorway for a little time frowning after him. He knew his father's moods and manners as very few sons do, for the two were uncommonly friendly, and, during the past ten years—since the younger man had left his university, in other words—had been a great deal together, sometimes under dangerous and trying conditions in remote parts of the world. In consequence of this he knew that the elder man had, in some sudden and mysterious fashion, suffered a twinge of severe physical pain or had been greatly disturbed by something from without. Men do not suddenly turn pale and haggard in a ballroom for nothing.

Of course he thought at once of Mrs. Dudley's young protégé. They had been

speaking of her and watching her when Creighton Blake had been so disturbed, but she was very evidently a young girl in her first season. There could have been nothing about her to make a man of five-and-fifty turn white. What else, then?

But suddenly young Blake gave an exclamation and burst out laughing, for he remembered the lady whom he had said this girl so remarkably resembled, and he knew that there were many men who might conceivably suffer a change of countenance at the mention of the lady's name. The probability that he had stumbled unawares upon a hitherto concealed romance of his father's amused him very much, and he was still laughing gently when he went across the ballroom to where the innocent cause of so much mystification stood surrounded by her friends.

He made his way among them and reminded the girl that she was his property for the next dance. She nodded and smiled at him, but as the music had not yet begun, and as the circle of young men showed a jealous tendency to close in against his attack, he turned to the Carterets and Farings who stood near, and they admitted him to their conversation after the manner of old friends. They chaffed him on his repulse at the hands of the young men, and offered to make a wager with him at any terms he liked if he would try it again.

But Sybil Carteret nodded a sympathetic head and took his part, saying—

"Never mind, Dicky! They're all much too young. Girls hate young men. It's the old and settled ones like you whom they adore. Wait till you've had your dance! And a word in your ear! There's a balcony yonder, on the garden side of the house, a long, long balcony divided into something like *cabinets particuliers* by palms and things. You can drag her there and make love to her."

Young Blake laughed and asked—

"What's her name? I don't even know her name." Mrs. Carteret told him that it was Vittoria Fleming, and he remembered that his father had known. He was thinking how odd that was when the waltz music began, and he forgot it again in his attack—successful this time, to the vociferous applause of the Carterets and Farings—upon the circle of the young men.

Miss Vittoria Fleming danced so much better than anyone else Blake had ever known that he found himself, somewhat to his astonishment, taking a real and half-

intoxicated delight in that hitherto despised entertainment. He and his father had often stood apart and jeered morosely at the ludicrous aspect of a roomful of otherwise sane people hopping or gliding gravely about with their arms round each other, albeit common civility sometimes demanded a like absurdity of themselves; but he was conscious that this girl danced because the necessity for dancing was in her soul—that she danced as naturally and with as instinctive a grace as leaves dance in a breeze; it was an expression of something in her and not a laboriously learnt art. He forgot the passage of time and the things round him, and was conscious only of being swept away in a perfection of movement, as one is swept away in the surge and thrill of very beautiful music. Then suddenly they halted, because the waltz was over, and Blake gave a little nervous laugh of surprise that it was so, and found himself looking into the eyes of Miss Vittoria Fleming, who also seemed a bit surprised and even displeased.

They were near the open windows which Sybil Carteret had pointed out, and he turned towards them, saying—

"There ought to be a balcony somewhere hereabouts, unless I've been misinformed."

"Oh, yes," said the girl composedly. "The balcony is just outside these windows. I've already been there." Blake looked at her and, in spite of himself, laughed.

"Let's try for a breath of fresh air, then," said he. "I suppose I ought to return you to your chaperon, whoever that is, but I don't want to. I'm selfish."

"Oh, she doesn't matter," the girl said. "I'm with my cousin, Mrs. Dudley, but she's far from strict. I dare say you'd find her somewhere on this balcony herself, if you wanted her. She's not the fierce sort of chaperon at all. I haven't seen her for a half-hour."

They went out through one of the long windows which were set close together down one side of the ballroom, and found themselves in a sort of tiny stall, set about and shut in by palms and flowering plants, for all the long balcony had been thus divided into dim green nooks. There was a cushioned seat placed against the outer rail, and over it one made out the black outlines of roofs and chimneys against a starry sky. A certain effect of discretion was lent the place by the fact that the balcony was so narrow as to make impossible a complete retreat from the public eye. The two sitting there must dimly be seen from the lighted ballroom,



“A number of young men had added themselves to the group.”



though, in the half-darkness, identity was fairly lost.

They stood for a moment in silence looking out across the quiet sky, and then, turning, made themselves comfortable among the cushions. The girl sat leaning forward a little, and a shaft of light from the window before them fell warmly upon her face and across her round throat, and touched one shoulder. Blake looked down at her without speaking. Something of that unwonted intoxication of the senses which had stirred him was awake still, and it stirred afresh as he slowly realised the girl's great and uncommon beauty.

He did not know many girls, for he and his father spent most of their time in travel, and, as has been said, they went to very few dances, where, it may be taken for granted, girls abound as nowhere else. But he was not an obtuse man, and he realised that this girl was not at all the sort of young person whom he had shown such agility in avoiding.

He had called her, in pointing her out to his father, a rather splendid young person, and he remembered that now, and decided that the adjective had been well chosen. Splendid was the word. The girl's face and body and bearing all gave a curious effect of unusual vitality, and yet with it all there was no lack of delicate fineness. Most women of superabundant vitality appear florid and a bit coarse—as they often really are—like certain varieties of over-gorgeous flowers, but Miss Vittoria Fleming was very far indeed from being anything of this sort. The quality in her seemed to be a certain potent magic of personality, a quality physical enough, doubtless, but not to be described in terms of colour or of line. Indeed, it cannot be described at all, for the strong personal magnetism which a few people exert upon almost all who come near them is quite beyond description.

Her likeness to a celebrated lady of the operatic world was, Blake found, less apparent at close range than at a distance—where it was really striking—for the girl's mouth was shorter and fuller and her forehead quite different, and she had a better chin, and, in her cheeks, a dull underlain of red which never went quite away. The resemblance was closer in the strong, slim figure and in a certain uncommon grace of movement—like an animal or a trained dancer.

"I wish you'd tell me something," he said at last, and the girl turned and looked up at him.

"Sybil Carteret," he went on, "told me that your name was Vittoria, and that is such an uncommon name for a Saxon that it made me wonder. You don't look like English, either, you know. You look Latin. Why did they call you Vittoria?"

She shook her head with a little grave smile.

"I truly don't know," said she. "Possibly I've Italian blood. My mother's name was Bianca—I found that out by accident once." She caught the man's slight, puzzled frown and explained—

"You see, I've never known my mother. She died when I was a tiny child, and my father—well, her death affected my father very much indeed. He never speaks of her and he never allows me to speak of her. I've never even seen a portrait of my mother. I expect that is rather odd, isn't it? but then we're extremely odd, my father and I—at least, we have lived oddly." She took her eyes from Blake's, and that deep underlain of colour in her cheeks heightened a very little. She said—

"You didn't ask for a family history, did you?" But the man said quickly—

"I'm asking for it now. Please go on. I'm interested, truly."

Miss Fleming looked up at him again in her grave, ungirlish fashion.

"That's very civil of you," she said, after a pause. "Of course, there's no reason why you should care to hear about my oddness." And Blake gave a sudden, involuntary laugh. That had been such a very strange thing to say. He decided that the girl had a great deal to learn in the way of that inconsequential banter which makes social intercourse possible.

Oddly still she went on to echo his thought.

"But I have no—small talk," she said.

"Isn't that what it's called—small talk? I've never been taught it, and so if I'm to talk at all, I might as well talk about me—about my father and me. It's all I know." She met the kindly laugh in the man's eyes, and her own eyes smiled back at him.

"I've always lived at Standish, our place in Hampshire," she said. "It's not far from Mickelford. Father and I have lived buried there ever since I can remember. We never have visitors and we see none of the neighbours—there aren't many, anyhow—except Beau Temple."

"Beau Temple?" broke in the man. "Do you mean Beaumont Temple the novelist?" And she nodded.

"Yes, he's an old friend of my father's—

and of mine, too—my only one, I fancy. Do you know him ? ”

“ I’ve met him once or twice,” Blake said. “ I wish I knew him better, but, you see, he’s rather a first-magnitude star. He’s a very important person.”

She asked : “ Have you read his books ? ”

Blake said : “ Yes, oh yes ! Some of them, that is. You see, I’m travelling a great deal. I don’t get much of a chance. They’re very fine, of course. One knows that.” And the girl gave a sudden little laugh of amusement.

“ Oh, confess you think them dull ! ” she said. “ Well, I think they’re dull, too ; but Beau is a nice person, and I’m very, very fond of him. If it hadn’t been for him, I should long ago have forgotten the use of words. I should have become a vegetable, for father and I exchange about three sentences a day.”

“ And what else do you do at Standish,” inquired the man, “ besides talking to Beaumont Temple ? It sounds a wee bit monotonous.”

“ It is more than a wee bit monotonous,” she said, frowning. “ It is dreadful. And yet—until my cousin asked me to come to London, I got on with it well enough. I had my dogs and my horse, and always my books. I’ve read everything, I think.” She broke out again into her sudden little laugh.

“ I shocked a very dear old lady terribly the other day—Mrs. Crowley—by mentioning a book that I’d lately read on sex and character. Do you think it’s terrible for a girl to have read anything on such subjects ? I suppose you do.”

“ Well, really,” said Blake uneasily—“ really, I don’t know. I’m afraid I don’t know any girls who go into things to quite that extent.” He began to laugh, and he shook his head at her in a sort of mock despair.

“ You don’t really exist, of course,” said he. “ I know I’m imagining all this. You never existed outside of mid-Victorian fiction. If you were real, you’d be very lean and you’d have thin, tight hair and spectacles. And you certainly wouldn’t dance as you do. Oh, no ! I don’t believe in you at all. Tell me,” he demanded abruptly, “ how did you, shut up in a country house with a hermit and a lot of books, learn to dance like—like *that* ? ”

The dark understain of colour in the girl’s cheeks deepened again and she looked away.

“ I don’t know,” she said, half under her

breath. “ Oh, I don’t know. I danced with the wind, I suppose. I suppose I danced with the leaves and the sunlight on the garden path. I don’t know.” And that seemed to the man to be one of the quaintest and one of the most pathetic little speeches he had ever heard. But she turned to him with a swift impulse, her great, dark eyes searching him for mockery.

“ Please don’t laugh ! ” she said quickly. “ That was a silly thing to say, but—I hate to be laughed at.” The voice died away, but the girl sat where she was, quite still, her eyes upon Blake’s eyes, and the faces of both of them were grave and unsmiling.

After a little the man shook his head.

“ Did you think I’d laugh ? ” he asked, and after a moment more she looked away and bent her beautiful head, and he saw her take one very deep breath, and saw her hands clasp and unclasp in her lap. In the end she said—

“ No. . . . No ! I think you’d understand.”

Before them, out in the lighted ballroom, the music was playing again, and dancers whirled past their retreat, but the two neither heard nor saw. An odd fit of constraint came upon them, a sort of embarrassment—a tacit recognition of that sudden still moment of meeting eyes. And the man, very man-like, sought refuge from it in a wholly banal speech. He said—

“ How do you like London ? Is it better than Standish and your books ? ”

She nodded her head, and, after a moment, abruptly that amazing flush of life and splendid youth transfigured her.

“ I love it ! ” she cried out. “ I’ve had the most wonderful time this winter and spring. The most fairy-princess sort of a time. You see, I’ve been visiting my cousin, Mrs. Dudley. Fancy these past four or five months, after all those years in the country !

“ I love it ! ” she cried again. “ It’s living—really, truly living ! I didn’t know what that was before. I only dreamed about it. . . . I suppose I only know the first steps of it now, but I love it. . . . I feel as if I’d been cheated out of something beautiful and thrilling all my life. I feel as if I’d always been in the dark. Well, I’m in the sun now, and I love it.” She turned towards the man with shining eyes, her hands at her breast.

“ I want to live ! ” she said. “ I do want to live ! Life is so very wonderful. One ought to find such wonderful things in it. . . .

Oh, I want to live, even if it hurts me sometimes. You don't know how I want it!" And once again that evening Blake thought he had seldom heard a more pathetic little speech. The girl seemed to him like a child in a dim room stretching its tiny arms towards the light of the window.

In spite of her appalling catholicity in the matter of literature, she knew so pitifully little of that life she cried out for!

"Your father lived, I take it," said he. "And it seems to have hurt him rather badly." But the girl's eager, flushed face did not change.

"However cruelly life may hurt me," she said, "I want to live. It's in me to want to live—to crave it."

And the man felt all at once convinced that she spoke the truth—even though she spoke as a child speaks, in utter ignorance.

He nodded his head very gravely once or twice. And he said—

"Yes, it's in you, I think."

He said—

"Life, such as you speak of, is rather sure to come to you. You're young and brave and very eager for happiness—all the kinds of happiness there are. And—if I may say it without offence—you're very beautiful. Oh, yes, what you crave is sure to come to you—for good or ill."

"For good or ill," said the girl, "I want it. I am not afraid." And again he nodded very gravely at her, saying—

"No, I'm sure of that. Perhaps you'd better be. Life is rather terrible sometimes."

"I am not afraid," the girl repeated.

She looked past him as if she were looking towards that future she sought so eagerly, as if she were trying to pierce the veil that cloaked it, and as if she chafed at the obscurity. Her eyes were wide and fearless, and her red lips were drawn tight together. All her slim, strong body seemed, as it were, to press forward to the quest, unhesitating, insistent. But the man who sat beside drew a quick little sigh, for, though he was not a very fanciful man, he was conscious of an odd uneasiness. And he was aware that he was afraid of her, though of what he could not have told.

So these two sat in silence for a little time—it may have been no more than a minute, but to the man it was very long. Then at last, as if she realised quite suddenly how grave they had become and how far they had strayed from a ballroom atmosphere, the girl broke into a half bewildered, half amused

little laugh, and once more leant back among her silken cushions.

"Will you be good enough to forgive me for my ravings?" she asked. "I must seem very, very young to you and very foolish! Don't I? But you've been so astonishingly good-natured over it!"

"Substitute sympathetic for good-natured," said Blake, "and I won't complain. If you've done me the honour of being frank with me, telling me the things you think and feel, it seems to me that I ought to be very grateful. It's an unusual compliment."

The girl looked up at him swiftly and away again, and she said—

"Thank you. You're—very good, you know."

And after a moment she said—

"Somebody else would have laughed, but you—understand things . . . I'm glad."

The dance music had stopped again, and presently Miss Fleming became aware of it and asked to be taken to her chaperon, saying that by this time searching parties were doubtless on foot in her pursuit. But when they had risen to go, she paused a moment, and, turning, looked once at the quiet, starlit sky and once round her at the palms and flowering plants which hemmed in their narrow retreat, and for the smallest moment she looked up into Blake's eyes, and then moved away. It was curiously eloquent. She could not have said so much, the man realised, in many words. Indeed, she could not have said it at all—her swift little, regretful farewell—but he understood, and was conscious of that inward stir which her dancing had first wakened in him, and which the straight glance of her eyes had rekindled afterwards. Already a strange sense of intimacy had come upon the two—a very thin and frail thread, as it were—invisible, but binding their lives together for good or ill.

So without further words they went out into the ballroom and down its thronged length. At the far end they found Mrs. Dudley, and Blake left the girl there—only to see her at once snatched up by a youth whom he heartily disliked. Then he found his hostess, made his adieu, and presently was in the street.

He had, in his hasty leave-taking, failed to observe an odd bit of by-play for which he was in part responsible, but, even if he had seen and heard it, it would have conveyed nothing to him whatever, so his loss was small. His progress down the ballroom with Vittoria Fleming had been eyed with a

strange excitement by a certain elderly gentleman who for many years had figured rather prominently in London society. This gentleman at last seized by the arm another elderly gentleman who was passing by, and, still in great excitement, whispered—

“Look there! Look there! Do you see young Richard Blake walking with that Fleming girl whom Catherine Dudley is bringing out? Do you see?” The second elderly gentleman, blinking confusedly, admitted that he saw, and asked what of it, whereupon the other again repeated the names.

“Don’t you understand? *Blake! Blake!* Young Richard Blake and Pender Fleming’s girl!” And at that the second elderly gentleman burst suddenly into a strange laugh and began to stare, saying—

“Heavens! Fleming’s girl!... Heavens, I say! That is a queer trick! Eh! what?”

“Very queer indeed!” agreed the first elderly gentleman.

## CHAPTER II.

### BLAKE PÈRE LOSES A HAND TO FATE.

It was a warm night of late spring, clear and starry, as has been said, and Blake turned down the street on foot. Beyond the long line of waiting carriages he crossed to the park side, which was deserted at that hour, and walked slowly on his way beside the iron palings. He went without haste, because he had not very far to go—a matter of possibly a mile and a half—and he wished time and solitude to think. He realised that he had, on that evening, been more profoundly moved by a woman’s charm than for a very long time, probably more than ever before, and he was disturbed by it and a little angry and a little alarmed, for he had no intention of losing that complete freedom of his which he prized more than anything else in the world. The alarm, if so strong a word can be used, arose from the fact that he knew himself rather better than do most young men of his age. He was, at this time, one-and-thirty, but in the course of his roving career he had been through more diverse experiences than most men, who remain respectably at home, ever meet in the whole span of a long life-time. And as the fruit of these experiences he knew that he was in peculiar danger so long as he allowed himself to be near Miss Vittoria Fleming, or even to think much about her. For each human being in this

world there is one other being, or perhaps there are two or three, whose attraction is so powerful that it overwhelms all other considerations, all obstacles, all laws—if such be in the way—all matters of right and wrong. Most people never meet this strange complement to themselves, but, in the rare cases in which the meeting has been brought about, the world’s great romances have been enacted, and sometimes history has been made or unmade.

Young Blake, as he walked slowly along, looked his fate in the face, and acknowledged it gravely with no pretence or non-recognition, for he knew well that unless he made a determined effort to avoid Vittoria Fleming, his life would be taken out of his hands and stirred and moved and at length settled for good or ill together with her life. But he passionately desired his freedom, and, as he walked, without being conscious of it, he quickened his pace to a sort of fierce march, and he struck savagely at the ground with the stick in his hand, and swore a determined oath that neither this girl nor any other being should rob him of that which he held so dear, should turn him—as he put it to himself—into a tame cat purring beside the domestic hearth—an attender of dances—an opera-box ornament—the father of a family!

He gave a sort of bellow of rage as he saw himself in these various capacities, and a lone policeman, standing under a lamp-post at the corner, looked at him with not unnatural suspicion, and even followed a step or two after him, debating with himself whether the man might not be mad.

In Charles Street the lift-boy told him that Mr. Blake senior had come in nearly an hour before, and so he went at once to his father’s rooms. He found Creighton Blake hanging over a table whereupon was spread a large map of the South Pacific Ocean, measuring off the distances between certain island groups, and making notes of these with a pencil and a bit of paper. He gave over his employment at his son’s entrance, and motioned to the other side of the room where stood decanters and syphons of soda-water, and smoking things. The younger man had already laid off his coat and hat, and had moved in the direction indicated without waiting to be pressed.

He turned back with a cigarette between his lips, and the ice clinking cheerfully in his long glass.

“I walked here,” he explained. “That’s why I’ve been so long. I wanted a breath of fresh air after those overheated rooms.”



"Did you have your dance with the pretty girl?" inquired his father, and young Blake said—

"With the girl who looks like Lina Strozzi—yes! Oh, yes, I had it." He permitted himself a little gentle laugh, and grinned across at the man who sat by the table; but Blake *père*, if he had seemed to betray emotion over this matter earlier in the evening, certainly had recovered meanwhile, for his face showed no more than a mild and rather perfunctory interest.

"She is certainly a very beautiful girl," the other went on, "and, though I haven't played with little girls much, I should think she is unusually interesting. She has—charm—extraordinary charm." He spoke with no enthusiasm, but rather critically, as one making an admission against his will.

The other man said—

"Yes. Yes. Quite so!" in an absent tone. And after a moment he said—

"That's high praise—from you."

But his son made a deprecatory gesture. He said—

"Oh, well, one must admit that Miss Fleming is rather unusual. I don't mean to rave over her. I merely speak in the terms I should use if I had seen an uncommonly fine picture or heard a new opera that pleased me. The girl has—a personality. . . . And she's amazingly vital, somehow. Yes, vital. I think she has a sort of passion for life. She has lived shut up in a country house for most of her life."

"Yes," said the elder man under his breath. It was as if he spoke to himself.

"Standish," he said, nodding.

His son turned and stared at him.

"Now, how the deuce did you know that?" he cried, and he thought that for just an instant his father looked startled. But if so, it was for no more than an instant, and he said indifferently—

"I think someone told me—someone who was speaking of this Miss Fleming to-night. She is Pender Fleming's daughter, you know—or you don't know, probably. He was before your time—older than I am."

The younger man began to walk back and forth across the room, holding his glass in one hand.

"A sort of passion for life," he said, frowning thoughtfully. "I wonder how it'll end with her, an extraordinarily beautiful young creature like that, popped suddenly into the world with a prodigious hunger for happiness, and no standards of experience to go by. By Jove, I—wonder! You know

there's something rather tragic about it—and there's tragedy in her face, too. . . . I saw it. Real tragedy. I wonder——"

He wheeled about swiftly, for the elder man had uttered a sharp exclamation that was followed by a little crash upon the littered table before him, as if he had struck it a blow with his hand. He leant forward as he sat, and his face in the concentrated glow of the electric reading-light seemed to work a little and to settle into deep lines.

"Are you preparing to fall in love with Vittoria Fleming?" he demanded.

His son gave a short laugh of utter amazement.

"Fall in love with her?" he cried. "In love? Good Heavens, no! What are you thinking of?"

"Your words certainly have that sound," said Blake *père* sharply.

"Well, then, they sound wrong," retorted his son. "I'm not falling in love with anybody, thank you!"

The other bent his head, and his fingers played and tapped upon the outspread map before him. After a little silence, he said in a different tone—

"It would be—very unfortunate. I should be more sorry than I can say." But his son laughed again, saying easily—

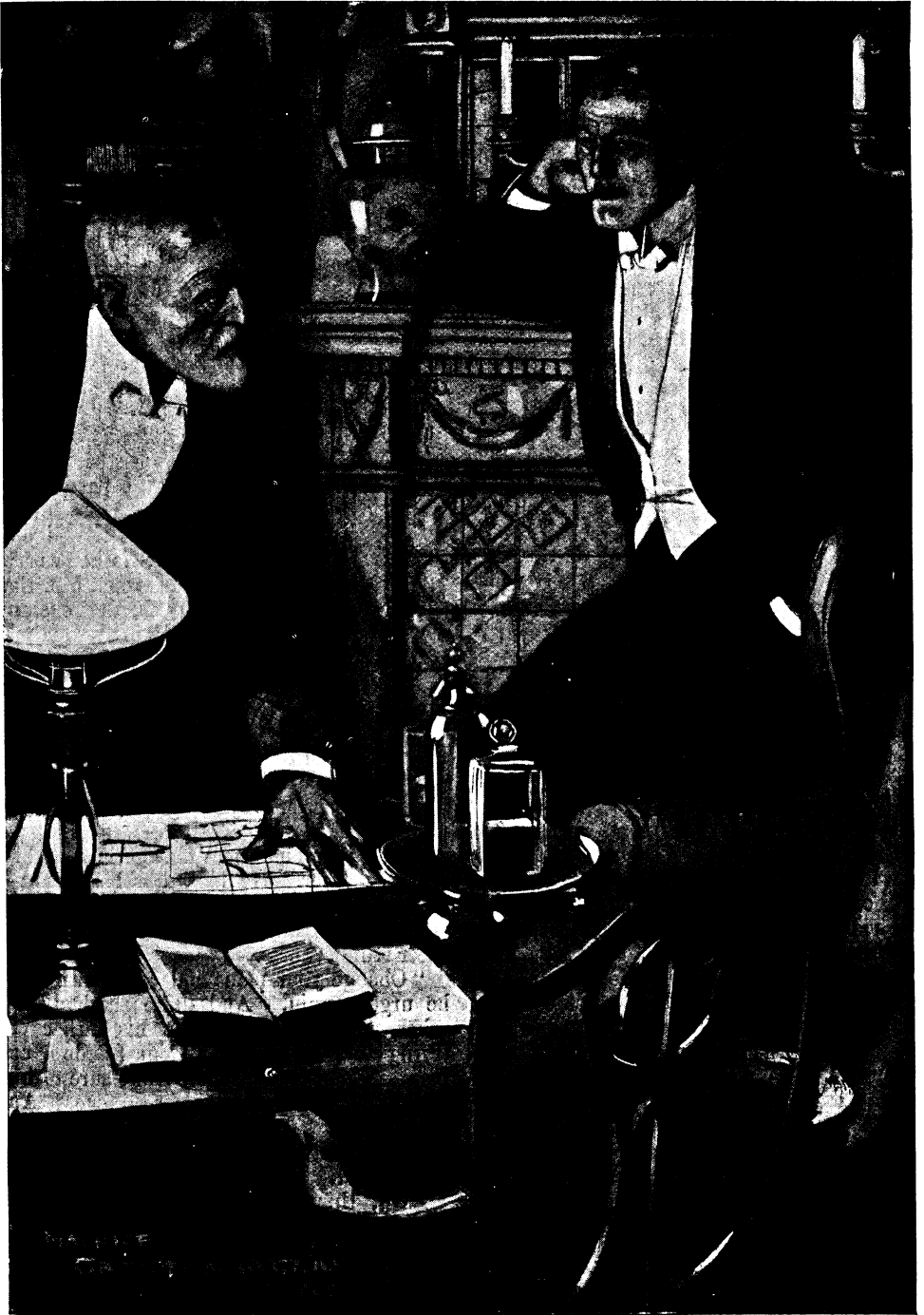
"Well, you may set your mind quite at rest. I have no intention of falling in love, and I certainly have no intention of allowing my freedom to be interfered with in any way. As to marriage, I think I have no vocation for that. I've roamed too much. I'm no more apt to marry than you are to marry again. We're both confirmed wanderers, I fancy."

The elder man's face relaxed slightly and he gave a faint smile.

"I dare say I'm alarming myself causelessly," he admitted. "I must be getting old when I begin to assume the anxious-hen-with-one-chick attitude. Yes, I must be getting old. . . ."

"Still," he said, frowning down at his outspread hands, "I wish you—I wish you hadn't met this young lady. Doubtless your intentions are firm enough, but I wish you hadn't met her. I should be more sorry than I can say if . . . very unfortunate." His voice trailed away into silence, and the younger man was left staring at him with a sort of exasperation.

"Hang it, father!" he broke out at last, "I can't say anything stronger than I've already said! I'm not in love. I don't mean to fall in love, and that's all there is



"I wish you hadn't met this young lady."



of it. I'm not quite an experienced school-boy, you know. I've served my apprenticeship in—in what are called love affairs, and they're not—well, they're not as labelled. They're not up to specifications. Besides, this is a young girl, and a love affair with her would naturally mean marriage. May I be hanged before I'm married!"

He began again his restless march back and forth across the room, but, after a little, halted again near where his father sat.

"And still," said he, "I don't quite understand your uncommon vehemence about this particular girl—about Miss Vittoria Fleming. If one were going to fall in love at all—which I am not—why not with her? What's wrong with her? I take it you wouldn't fly into a passion if I had been dancing with Marian Cobham or with Caroline Stanley, or any other of the hundred we saw this evening. Why this anguish over Vittoria Fleming?"

The elder man stirred in his chair.

"Oh, I—I don't know," he said slowly. "You see, it happened to be Miss Fleming, not one of the others. . . . That's all. . . . And perhaps—perhaps in the glimpse I had of her, I saw what you seem to have seen, an atmosphere of—tragedy. She has tragedy in her face, and about her." The man's head was bent over the table, and he said something further in a low tone. Young Blake did not hear the words, and asked—

"What? I beg your pardon?" His father shook his head.

"Nothing!"

But what he had said was—

"Small wonder! Oh, small wonder!"

And after that he said no more for a long time, only sat with bent head, his hands stretched out before him, the fingers moving idly about upon the map of the South Pacific Ocean. But at last he drew a long sigh and rose to his feet. He made a gesture with both hands which seemed definitely to dismiss the subject they had been discussing—to say, "Enough! No more of that!"—and he took a fresh cigar, throwing away the one which he had allowed to die out, and lighted it, and puffed a few great clouds of smoke.

"I've been planning out my probable wanderings for the next six or eight months," he said. "As much as I care to plan them in advance, that is. Actually, I mean to move where and when the spirit stirs me."

"You're off at the end of this week, then?" asked the younger man, and Creighton Blake nodded.

"I'm going straight to Quebec and then to Vancouver," said he. "There I shall sail

for Suva in the Fijis. McNaughton will meet me there with the schooner, and then—the world's before me. At least, the South Seas are."

He turned quickly, as if a sudden thought had struck him.

"Chuck up your Armenian tour and come with me!" he said. "By Jove! why not? You can go there any time. Ararat and the ark will wait. Come with me."

The younger man stared.

"Oh, I say!" he exclaimed, "how about your Australian? How about McNaughton? And, for that matter, how about the people I'm to go to Armenia with?"

"Hang McNaughton!" said his father. "There's room in the schooner for a third. We could manage easily enough." He came a pace nearer, with a sort of excitement in his usually still face.

"Come with me!" he insisted. "Let your people go without you. I particularly wish you'd come."

The younger man sat against the edge of the big table and regarded his father with a frowning, puzzled smile. It struck him that the elder man had been all the evening behaving very oddly and in a manner singularly unlike himself.

"Yes, but look here!" he objected. "We've talked this all over before, and decided to go different ways. It was really your own plan to go off with this McNaughton. You practically turned me out of it when I suggested joining you. I don't understand."

"I suppose a man may change his mind?" said the other. He looked a bit defiant—rather like an elderly boy who knows that he is acting foolishly, but persists in it out of sheer stubbornness.

"Change your plans and come with us!" he urged again. And quite suddenly the other man was aware that his father was trying to get him away from London, and from—whom? Trying to make sure of him by having him under his own eye. And with that a wave of anger flared up in him, for he conceived that he was being treated like a child. He stood up frowning.

"Oh, this is nonsense!" he said impatiently. "We can't both change our plans thus late in the day. You know quite well that yours would be altogether deranged by my coming with you." He looked into his father's eyes with a brief laugh that was almost of scorn.

"You *are* rather assuming the anxious-hen-with-one-chick attitude, aren't you?"

said he. "Don't! I beg of you. It's a long time since I was a chick. I'm quite able-bodied, and no more foolish than I shall always be."

Abruptly the elder man's flush of eagerness fled from him, and he seemed to shrink within himself. He looked all at once tired and aged.

"Ah, well, as you like! As you like!" he said querulously. "You've grown up, as you say."

The other had taken up his hat and coat in preparation to leaving the room, but he moved nearer to him and touched his son on the arm.

"I don't want to seem altogether an old woman," said he, "but—that girl, you know. Keep away! Keep away! Don't see any more of her. Put it as a sort of favour to me, if you like."

A little mischievous whim seized the younger man.

"Fate may be working against you, you know," he laughed. "One can't fight Fate!"

Creighton Blake gave a sudden violent shiver and turned back to his table. He said—

"Good night! Good night!" over his shoulder in an abrupt tone, and the younger man closed his father's door and went away wondering.

### CHAPTER III.

#### APPEARS DONNA BIANCA.

It was late when Mrs. Dudley and her charge left the dance to go home. Vittoria had been so very much in demand, and had been so obviously experiencing what low people would term "the time of her life," that her duenna had lacked the heart to force the girl to an earlier departure. Moreover, truth to tell, the elder lady herself had been far from dull, for still young—two or three and thirty—and very popular both among her own sex and among men.

But when they were at last tucked away in the softly cushioned, softly lighted interior of the electric brougham, and were rolling homeward, she was a little tired and sleepy, and made a pretence of being more so, for she wanted a space in which to think and to prepare a course of action before that inevitable symposium of impressions and recollections which for all women intervenes between an important social event and bed.

The exigencies of common civility had

compelled her, much against her will, to ask Richard Blake to call, and she wondered if certain other exigencies did not demand that she and Vittoria Fleming, or at least Vittoria, should avoid seeing him if he chose to take advantage of her invitation. She liked Blake very much indeed, as did almost all who knew him, but she was aware of certain facts which not unreasonably seemed to her to make it impossible that he and the girl who was in her charge should see much of each other or should run the risk of awakening between them any interest.

It has been said that she was a rather young woman, and therefore the things she knew about this matter were necessarily hearsay and report; still, the very facts, whatever softening and extenuating circumstances may have draped them, were clear enough, and even to Mrs. Dudley, who was a very modern person and no prude, they seemed to loom very high across the path of Vittoria Fleming and Richard Blake—an unsurmountable obstruction with *Rue Barrée* printed black across it.

So she leant back in her corner of the brougham, with closed eyes, and tried to think what she must do in the perfectly possible event of these two perfectly impossible young people taking a fancy to each other.

It was completely out of the question to tell Vittoria frankly what she knew, and, without that recourse, it might be a very difficult affair to manage. It came to Mrs. Dudley suddenly that young girls, though very refreshing, were rather a nuisance, and she was almost glad she had none of her own, though hitherto her childless state had been the sole sorrow of her life.

She had progressed not a step on her way of preparation when they reached home, and no farther when, somewhat later, Miss Fleming knocked at the door of her dressing-room and asked if she might come in for a few minutes before going to bed.

She said "Yes" in the apprehensive tone of a student who, entirely without preparation, enters her classroom to be examined in a term's work. She was sitting before her dressing-table, and her maid, a silent, middle-aged Swiss, who understood English only when it was pronounced very slowly and very distinctly, was doing her hair for the night; but she called over her shoulder, and the girl moved up beside her, and stood there a moment before settling herself in a near-by chair.

She was in a thin silk dressing-gown, that

with every movement of her beautiful young body lay close and veil-like; and Mrs. Dudley cried out in admiration and despair when she saw her. The girl was so slender that with less perfect modelling she must have been thin, but in reality, so round and compact and deep-chested was she that, to borrow Catherine Dudley's vigorous phrase, she had not a bone to her name. There is in English no name for this rare condition, but a Frenchman would have called the girl a *fausse maigre*, and so expressed the matter perfectly.

"My dear child," said the elder woman, "it is a very good thing for us both that I have never had any illusions about my personal appearance. If I were in the least vain, I shouldn't be able to bear having such a creature as you near me. I should scratch your eyes out in sheer rage. I suppose you know that you are a great beauty? Heaps of people must have told you so."

The girl coloured and gave an embarrassed little laugh.

"I'm glad you think me pretty," she said. "I'm very glad. There's been nobody to tell me so, you see, until I came to London—even if anyone thought it."

"How many men told you so to-night?" demanded Mrs. Dudley, and watched the dark colour again flood up into Vittoria Fleming's cheeks.

"I think only one," she said simply. "Directly, that is. And," she added, "I suppose I mustn't tell who he was. That wouldn't be quite fair, would it?"

Mrs. Dudley came as near roaring with laughter as a lady may, but the girl went on quite soberly—

"And, anyhow, I look like a thin squaw or something of the sort beside such beauties as Mrs. Faring and Mrs. Rivers. I looked like a starved immigrant with a print handkerchief over her head. Mrs. Rivers is the most beautiful person I have ever seen or heard of."

"Yes, she is very, very beautiful," agreed the elder woman, "and so is Béatrix Faring, though people are beginning to call Béatrix statuesque and handsome, and that's the beginning of her downfall. That's what comes to every great beauty. She marries and continues to reign for a little time, and then she begins to take on more weight and quite suddenly she is cut out by some new girl. Mrs. Rivers is reigning just now, and she is splendid beyond words; but if I'm not mistaken, you'll damage her severely before another season is out. You see, my dear, you have something that none of those others

have, not Béatrix Faring nor Sybil Carteret, nor even Mrs. Rivers. Your type is entirely exotic. All these others have been the usual sort of Anglo-Saxon beauty raised to the *n<sup>th</sup>* degree. You're pure Latin, and that gives you a great advantage. You're unusual. That's because your mother was Italian, of course."

"Ah!" cried the girl. "Then she *was* Italian?" Mrs. Dudley stared at her.

"Do you mean to say you didn't know?"

The girl shook her head.

"Her death nearly killed my father," said she, "and he never speaks of her or allows me to. I know her name was Bianca, and that, with my name, made me sure that she must have been Italian. But that's quite all I know. You see, there has been no one to tell me, and I've become so used, all my life, to avoiding any mention of her, that I can't make her seem at all real to me. It's as if I never had any mother at all."

Mrs. Dudley looked across at the girl, frowning thoughtfully, and after a little she said—

"You poor baby!"

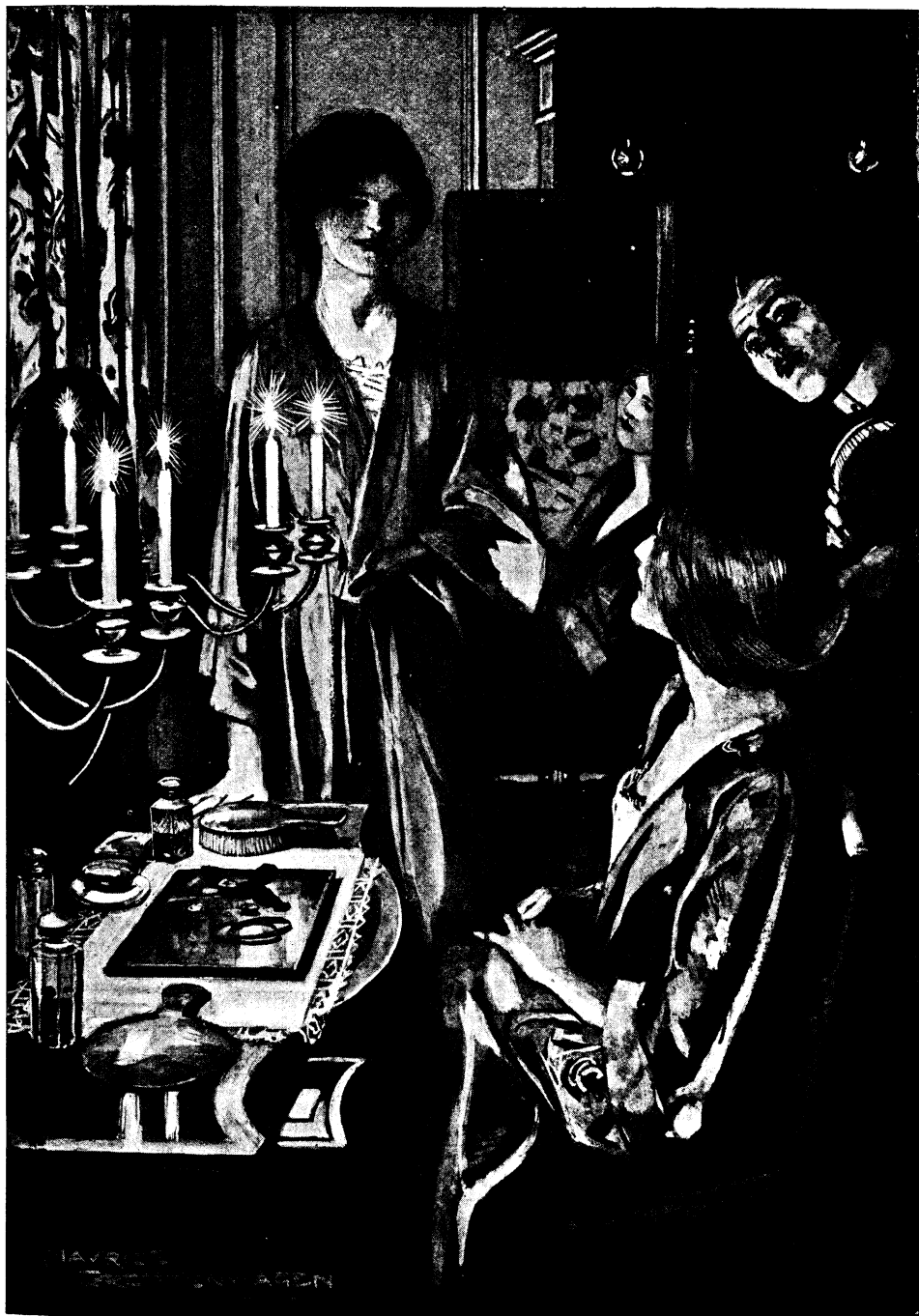
"Yes," she said after another pause, "I knew Pender was terribly—affected and—changed. Though Heaven knows he was always sombre enough! But I didn't know how he carried it to that extreme. You poor dear child!"

The girl leant forward with eager, flushed cheeks and pleading eyes.

"Would you mind?" she said. "Do you think you could—could tell me a little about my mother? Did you ever know her or even see her? . . . Even any littlest bit of a thing, to make her real to me. I should love it so! . . . It seems to me rather terrible for a girl never to have any mother, not even a scrap of one. . . . Couldn't you tell me a little about her?"

A quick moisture of tears had come to the girl's dark eyes, and her lips were trembling. She seemed to the elder woman a poignantly pathetic figure, this splendid young beauty who begged with tears for "even the littlest bit of a thing" to make her mother real to her.

"Oh, my dear," she cried, "I wish I could give you more than I can. I know so little! I saw your mother only once or twice, I think. You see, I was a child when she married your father—eight or ten. I remember only that she was very beautiful and kind and sweet, and that everyone loved her. She had wistful, pleading eyes, I know. I realised that, young as I was. And I



"The girl . . . stood there a moment."

remember very well the one time I actually met her. It was at old Mrs. Crowley's—Aunt Arabella Crowley, as everyone calls her—down in Woodvale Park. I forget why I was taken there, but I remember that when we went into the drawing-room, your beautiful mother was there, talking to Aunt Arabella. I was a stumpy, ill-natured little brat at that time, and hideously shy, but when she put her arm about me and kissed my cheek, and began to talk to me, not as grown-ups talk to children, tolerantly from their mountain-top, but woman to woman, as it were, I simply grovelled at her feet. I know that I used to dream about her for years after that, and when I read fairy tales, the fairy princess was always your mother . . . As a matter of fact, I believe she *was* a sort of princess in her own right. I know before she was married she used to be called 'Donna Bianca,' and someone once told me that her father, who had died long since, was Prince Cornaro. Her mother was English. Whether or not he was the head of his family I don't know, but I suppose in any case you've a right to the title; and if it's the Venetian Cornaro, you come of a very old and illustrious house, my dear. There was a real Queen among them once. Caterina Cornaro was Queen of Cyprus until she was cheated out of it. I don't know where the later title came from—the princely one. I suppose it must have been Papal. Those great Venetian houses didn't use titles ordinarily, did they?"

Vittoria did not seem very greatly impressed by her ancient and illustrious descent, but she sat for a long time silent, smiling a little, her eyes wide and absent, her hands clasped in her lap.

But at last she said—

"Oh, thank you for telling me about her! Thank you more than I can say. It's not a little. It's a great deal. I shall be able to think of her now as she was. I shall have a real mother at last." Two tears which had been brimming in her eyes fell and wet her flushed cheeks, but they were tears of joy and not of sorrow.

"I shall have a real mother at last," she said again, "a beautiful, tender, fairy-princess mother to dream of and talk to. Oh, it was cruel of them to cheat me out of my mother for so long!"

Mrs. Dudley bent forward and kissed her.

"Yes, my dear," said she. "I think it was cruel, too. And I'm glad to have been able to tell you even this little about her. I'm sorry that I know—that I can tell no more."

"And now," she said, "tell me about this dance to-night. Had you a good time? And did heaps of young men make violent love to you?"

Vittoria met her change of tone with a quick smile and brightening eyes.

"A heavenly time!" said she. "Ah, a heavenly time! But no young men made violent love to me. That is, I think not. Of course, sometimes one can't be quite sure. Oh, by the way. . . . I met a new man to-night. . . . I think I like him very much. He had nice eyes and a nice smile. . . . And he understands . . . things. . . . A weather-beaten looking man—as if he had been in the sun and wind a great deal. His name was Blake. Do you know him well? I haven't seen him at any of the other places this spring—not even at the opera."

Mrs. Dudley took a long breath. It was come at last, then. And she had imagined herself, for the present, safe.

"Blake?" she asked. "Do you mean the father or the son, I wonder? They usually go about in pairs."

"Oh, it would be the son, I'm sure," said Vittoria. "But I fancy I saw the father, too, if there is one. He was standing in a doorway with the other—that was before my dance with the younger one—and I met his eye. A tired man with grey hair."

"Yes," said Mrs. Dudley slowly. "A tired man: that's Creighton Blake. Yes, he's very tired, I think—and not too happy. He spends his life travelling about in strange places. Possibly he thinks they'll rest him, but I doubt if they do. The son, Richard, I hardly know. No, I don't know him well. He is seldom in London. Of course, I asked him to call when he brought you to me after your dance. I almost had to, for, after all, I have known him slightly for a long time. . . . But—well, I don't know."

"You don't like him?" said the girl quickly. "Why? He seemed to me to be a man I should trust . . . with anything. A strong sort of man. What is wrong with him?"

Mrs. Dudley moved uneasily in her chair and avoided the girl's glance. Her face showed a rather absurd distress, for she was naturally a very honest and direct woman, and, in this instance, honesty and directness were out of the question. Another sort of woman could have told damaging lies about poor Blake, and eased her conscience with the argument Jesuitical. But it was difficult for Catherine Dudley to lie. She lacked practice.

"I don't know," she said again, with a troubled frown. "It is not easy to say just what I feel. I don't want to be unjust to Richard Blake. I rather like him. But—when it's a matter of a young girl, I don't know. He has figured in one or two romantic complications that might alarm a mother somewhat. I can't quite explain—" She halted, a bit flushed and breathless, for she found the matter difficult, though she had spoken no more than the exact truth.

"Oh, you can tell me anything," said Vittoria composedly. "I've always been allowed to read whatever I liked, you see, and I know about most things, though I'm a girl, and so supposed to be a fool."

Mrs. Dudley uttered a faint and plaintive "My dear! My dear!" but the girl went on quite calmly—

"I don't in the least mind a man's having had what are called 'affairs'—I think I heartily dislike good young men—so long as the affairs were not cowardly or mean and did not take advantage of anybody's weakness. I can't believe that Mr. Blake has ever done any of those things. Do you know that he has?"

"No," said the elder woman honestly, "I don't know that he has, and I don't believe that he has. And still, the tendency to 'affairs' is not a very promising or safe tendency. I think such men are better left alone—by girls, that is. Besides, he has the roaming habit. He's always off for some remote and unknown land or sea. He's a sort of gentleman vagabond—if that means anything. Vagabonds have a kind of romantic interest, my dear, but they're impossible on the practical side. They love and ride away."

"Mr. Blake hasn't loved me yet," objected the girl quite reasonably. "And I've no cause at all for thinking that he ever will." She halted upon that, for she realised that she was saying something she believed to be untrue. There was the matter of that long, still look on the balcony outside the ball-room: the matter of that mysterious and nameless presence which each of the two knew well the other had thrilled to. . . . And he had said that she was beautiful—albeit in sober argument, not lovemaking.

Little enough, all this! But out of far less a girl's young fancy builds Spanish castles of beauty and delight, and dwells therein.

"In any case," she said, "you have asked him to call. And I shall see him unless you forbid me. I liked him, you know."

"Oh," said the badgered Mrs. Dudley, plaintively again, "I shouldn't think of going so far as that. I shouldn't think of forbidding you anything, child. But I truly believe—ah, well, perhaps he won't call. Then everything will be all right."

Miss Fleming allowed herself a slight smile.

"I think he will call," said she; "yes, I think he'll call."

Then, because it was very late, she kissed her cousin an affectionate "Good night!" and went to her own room. Her maid had taken away the discarded clothes, and had gone herself, leaving everything ready for the night—the windows darkened, for morning was already grey outside, and one or two of the lights on.

Vittoria slipped off her silk dressing-gown and put out the lights. She stood a moment beside her bed in the darkness, and she strained her eyes to lift through that darkness the "purple painted headlands" of the life which was to come to her and the love which was to make it sweet. She was without coherent thought, but oddly her tongue formed words. It said again, without her conscious direction, what it had said some hours before to Richard Blake on the balcony. It said—

"I want to live . . . I want to live. Life is so very wonderful. One ought to find such wonderful things in it. . . . Oh, I want to live, even if it hurts me sometimes. You don't know how I want it."

Out of the gloom a deep and very gentle voice warned—

"Life is rather terrible sometimes."

But again the girl's tongue, unbidden, said—

"I am not afraid!"

The words had almost the sound of a battle-cry—a defiance flung in the face of Destiny.

(To be continued.)





“She . . . . upped with ’er spide, and brought it down with all ’er force on ’is ’at.”

## SARA.

By BARRY PAIN.

**T**HE defendant was Miss Sara Frederica Constantia Hallowes, hereinafter called Sara for short, aged seven, resident at present at 114, Marine Parade, Salton-on-Sea.

The judge was Mrs. Amy Hallowes, aged thirty-two, of the same address, mother of the above.

Jane Shotover, nurse, aged twenty-four, gave evidence as follows—

“It ’appened like thissum. I was setting under the breakwaterum, and I give Misserrer her spide, and I said, ‘Now, if you was to build a nice, pretty castle out of sand, then I’d come and look at it, and that would be a s’prise.’ She’d give some trouble over me not letting of ’er ride ’er donkey into the sea, and what I wanted was to keep ’er mind off.”

Sara : I want the red ink.

The Judge : Hush. Go on, nurse.

“Wellum, she took ’er spide and started off, wanderin’ about among the people, which was not what she’d been told. She’d got ’er shoes and stockin’s off, and ’er skirts tucked into them mackintosh drors ; so I didn’t see ’ow she could come to no ’arm. But I kept my hi on ’er, and every now and again I’d sing out to ’er to get on with that castle. There was a old gennelman settin’ on the beach, readin’ of a piper. Looked to me like something in the insurance line.”

The Judge : What made you think that, nurse ?

“Wellum, ’e’d got a pile grey felt ’at and was sixty if ’e was a dye, but that may have been just my idea. Any’ow, Misserrer started walkin’ round an’ round ’im, like a teetotum, and people on the beach larfin’ at ’er as

might have known better, and I could see he was gettin' annoyed."

The Judge: You ought to have stopped her, nurse.

"So I diddum. At least, so I was goin' to do. But just as I got up with 'er——"

Sara: Can I have the red ink now, mummie?

The Judge: Hush! I want to hear what you've been doing. Well, nurse?

"As I was saying, just as I got up with 'er, she worked round to the back of the insurance gennelman, upped with 'er spide, and brought it down with all 'er force on 'is 'at. Of course I erpolergised, but I could see he was put out about it, though that was no reason for using the word he did."

Sara: I want to do a pickshur of a insurance wiv his head bleed-ing. So, can I have the red——

The Judge: Hush! and don't interrupt again.

"Wellum.

Them as was larfin' before larfed worse than ever, and I'm shaw the wye some of them lyedies offer 'er chocklits and let 'er plye with their dogs, which mye be sife or mye not, is nothin' short of a—well, you 'ardly know what to sye to 'em. So I just took and brought 'er strite 'ome."

Sara: And now can I have the red ink?

The Judge: Leave her to me, nurse. I'll send her up to you directly.

"Very gooddum."

The judge, left alone with Sara, pointed out that she was not to go chattering to

strangers, who did not really want her; and much less was she to walk round and round them; and much, much less was she to beat the pale grey hat of a gentleman with her spade. She had been a naughty child, and was to go up to the nursery for the rest of the morning.

Sara: And can I take the red ink up too?

That reminded the judge. She did not want Sara to think or talk about terrible or ugly things. A nice-minded little girl would not even wish to make a picture of a poor gentleman with a nasty wound in his head. She would rather think about

beautiful things. There were plenty of beautiful things all around us. (*The Young Mother's Handbook. By Charles Baldley Rushington, B.A.*)

"What's beautiful?" asked Sara.

The judge sternly repressed an absolutely senseless impulse to say that Sara herself was



"Can't do poppies wivout red ink," said Sara."

the most perfectly beautiful thing on earth. She pointed out of the window and asked what could be more beautiful than that field of corn with the poppies dotted all about it?

"Can't do poppies wivout red ink," said Sara.

\* \* \* \* \*

After Sara had gone to bed that evening, her nurse obtained permission to go out for a breath of fresh air. She met the breath of fresh air on the beach by appointment, and its name was George. He was an honest man, but looked as if his clothes were too much for him.

Jane began to narrate her sorrows to George, and was a little annoyed to find in him no sympathetic depression.

"Ah!" said George, "kids will be kids. Nice little thing she always looks, too."

"And that's what always 'appens," said Jane with bitter conviction. "She goes a-dancin' about that beach like some wild Injun, and then lyedies says, 'Isn't she sweetly quaint?' and words like them. I've no patience with it. Well, as I was syin', 'er mother give 'er a talkin' to over what she'd done to the insurance gennelman's 'at, and then she come up to the nursery lookin' as meek as Moses, and both 'er little 'ands under

'er pinafore. 'You come 'ere, Misserrerr, and 'ave yer 'air done,' I says, and caught 'old of 'er. I wasn't rough, because that ain't my way, and no gel that was rough could keep my plice for ten minutes. But there—all of a sudden there was that pore child's life-blood gushin' out of 'er and streamin' across the floor. Lor', it did give me a turn. I come over quite faint, went as white as a sheet, and might 'ave fallen if it 'adn't bin for the sewing-machine. And there she stood in a reg'lar pool of it, larfin' like any-think."

George seemed mildly puzzled. "Look 'ere," he said, "what are you tellin' us?"

"Well, to make a long story short, it wasn't 'er life-blood. She'd bin botherin' 'er mother to let 'er 'ave the red ink, and 'er mother didn't say 'Yes' and didn't say 'No.' So afore she come up to the nursery, that child slipped into the library and 'id the red ink under 'er pinafore so as I shouldn't tike it awye. And so, as a matter of course——"

Jane broke off her narration, in dignified disgust at George's behaviour. "Oh, well, George, if it amuses you, perhaps the less I say the better. What you don't seem to see is if that 'adn't bin red ink, I should have been a murderer."

## THE HUNTING OF THE WITCH.

**I** ROSE up one bright winter's morning:

My heart was as heavy as lead;

I thought to go mope in the garden,

But I followed the hounds instead.

To hear the halloo in the valley

You'd ha' thought they were hunting  
a hare,

But as soon as I heard I knew better—

'Twas a weary old witch called Care.

At dusk she lay down by my pillow,

At dawn she was haunting me still:

No bell, book, and candle could fright her,

No silver bullet could kill;

But she ran from the voice of the hunts-  
man,

She fled from the twang of the horn,

And the sound of the hounds' merry music

Afar on the windy morn.

By fold and by clough and by moorland

We hunted her all the day long,

And I swear that the countryside over

There was never a hare so strong.

Whoop! tear her! good hounds, now you've got her!

You thought you were hunting a hare;

But I know all the while that you've rid me

Of a weary old witch called Care!

C. FOX SMITH.

# THE LAST MAN IN.

BY W. B. MAXWELL,

*Author of "Vivien," "The Guarded Flame," "The Ragged Messenger," etc.*



THE usual evening visitors were assembled in the taproom of the Stag Inn, and Mr. Judd, the landlord, serving unassisted, had full employment. The Stag was a humble tavern in a poor street of a country

town; but no doubt it seemed to its frequenters on this cold winter's night a snug and agreeable little club—a place of brightness and ease after the long day's toil.

Behind the taproom was the commonly furnished and rather bare living-room, and here Mrs. Judd, the landlady, sat with a certain air of state. For her, too, the day's work was done. She amused herself, but did not labour, with some repairs to a large pile of Mr. Judd's socks and under-garments, and as she stitched and darned, she paused often to glance reflectively at the coal fire, the shabby armchair by the hearth, the brass clock and the oleograph pictures, or to listen to the voices in the other room. The small-paned window between the two rooms had a red curtain drawn across it, so that one could not see the company, but the open door permitted one to enjoy much of their jovial chatter and laughter.

"Good evenin', Mrs. Judd."

Mr. Billett, an old customer, had appeared in the doorway, smoking his pipe and carrying his pot of beer.

"Good evenin', Mr. Billett. You're very noisy in there to-night. What's all the fun about?"

"It isn't exactly fun," said Mr. Billett pompously. "We've been arguing out this London murder."

"Oh, lor'!"

"'Orrible business, ain't it? But there's something very fascinating to me in a murder"; and Mr. Billett put his pot of beer on the ledge just inside the door and came forward into the room.

"Yes," said Mrs. Judd. "I like a good secret murder as much as anything in the

paper. But not this sort—to be butchered in the open street. It makes my flesh creep to think of." She folded a garment with a decisive manner and laid it in her work-basket. "If that's London ways, I say you can 'ave London. Give me Bratford."

"Oh, don't be down on London. I lived there once. There's life in London."

"Yes, and death too—seemly."

"The attraction to me of a murder," said Mr. Billett sententiously, "is the problem it offers the intellect—to pierce the myst'ry and put your 'and on the culprit. I argue in this case they'll catch him—the one as done it—the London police will. The detection of criminals has been brought to a fine art in London."

While he spoke, a hand and arm appeared round the door-jamb, and Mr. Billett's pot of beer was cautiously and stealthily withdrawn into the taproom. Mr. Billett did not observe this action, and he smiled superciliously when the loud and jovial voice of an unseen friend addressed him.

"You talk too much, old boy," said the voice, and there were sounds of general merriment in the taproom.

"I don't mind them," said Mr. Billett. "I won the argument in there. I was about to tell you, ma'am, that a cousin of mine belonged to the London p'lice force once. But he dropped out of it. In many respects my cousin resembled me; for he——"

The appearance of the landlord interrupted Mr. Billett's stream of reminiscences. Mr. Judd, a red-haired, dry old fellow, had a short clay pipe in his mouth, and he carried a tray with a whisky-bottle, glass, and water-jug. On his way to his wife's table, he stopped and asked Mr. Billett a question in a confidential whisper.

"Who's that man in the corner—him that came in last?"

"I dunno 'im. A new customer."

"None of the chaps seem to know him. And I don't care for the look of him. . . . Here y'are, missus"; and Mr. Judd placed the tray beside the work-basket, and mixed a glass of whisky and water for his wife.

"Doctor's orders," said Mrs. Judd, with

an explanatory wave of her needle towards Mr. Billett. "Doctor Page tells me I want it."

"I don't require a doctor to tell me that," said Mr. Billett facetiously. "I *know* I want it."

Mrs. Judd assumed considerable dignity.

"I'm not as young as I was—I'm over sixty-two years of age—and I do all my own housework still."

"That's a fact, Mr. Billett."

"We don't keep no servant," continued Mrs. Judd, "and I'm tired by the end of the day."

Mr. Judd handed her the glass. "There's your nightcap."

"Nightcap!" cried Mr. Billett. "He hasn't *laced* it like a nightcap should be. *That* ain't no style."

Mrs. Judd took the glass with the utmost dignity; but as she raised it, her manner relaxed. The wrinkles about her eyes deepened, and her lips twitched under the stress of a humorous idea. "The King. God bless 'im!" and she took a sip. "Gentlemen, you may smoke." She looked round and pretended to be greatly surprised. "But you *are* smoking. Without permission—in a lady's drawin'-room. Oh, what manners!" And she laughed merrily.

"Mother," said Mr. Judd, grinning at her, "your good news has gone to yer 'ead"; and he hurried back to his noisy guests.

"Ah, yes," said Mr. Billett, coming to the table. "My congratulations, ma'am—and fully sincere. And may all the tale be true!"

"What's the tale, indeed?"

"Why, your son coming home."

"That's true—so far."

"And you to buy this place for your own—yes, and keep what servants you please."

"Oh, that's all neighbours' gossip." Mrs. Judd picked up a tattered sock briskly and cheerfully. "They know we expect our son, so they make him out to come home with a fortune."

"Ah, but there's more at the back of it than mere chatterboxing," and Mr. Billett's tone had a friendly knowingness in it. "He said himself he was returning with money in his pockets."

"Yes."

"That was the expression in his letter, wasn't it? . . . Well, such words may mean a lot. It's how a rich man might put it—modest. A rich man don't want to boast—least of all to his own parents."

"We'll know what he meant in another month." Mrs. Judd was threading her

needle with slightly tremulous fingers. "Sober and kind, Mr. Billett, is as good to a mother's heart as rich and free."

"You'll get both. Mark my words. It's the wild 'uns that turn out best in the end."

"I 'ope so," said Mrs. Judd rather sadly.

"From what Mr. Judd has let fall now and again, I take it he *was* a wild 'un, but never a *wrong* 'un."

Mrs. Judd ignored the implied question.

"Eleven years, Mr. Billett! That's what he's been away from us. It's a long time—a long time."

"I'll drink you luck—and don't forget sincere old friends when the luck comes."

Then Mr. Billett, going back to the ledge by the doorway, discovered that his pot of beer had been removed.

"Who's taken my beer?" he asked excitedly and angrily, as he plunged into the taproom. "Which of you done this?"

"You talk too long-winded," said a voice. "Makes us dry to listen to you."

"I ask, who done it?"

"You know so much," said another voice, "about the detection of crim'nals, you can find out for yourself."

A chorus of laughter greeted this sally; one heard many voices mingling, and in the midst of the noise Mr. Billett still angrily protesting. Presently, during a lull of the animated chatter, Mrs. Judd looked up from her work and poised the darning-needle in a listening attitude.

"'Ark! That's the paper-boy. He's behind his time," and she glanced at the clock. "More'n 'arf a' 'our."

The shrill voice of the newspaper-boy could be heard approaching in the narrow street.

"Horrible murder. . . . Latest particulars . . . The London mur—der. . . ."

Mrs. Judd called to the open doorway.

"One of you gentlemen be so kind as to get my paper for me—will you kindly? Don't let the boy pass the house. Young imp'll do that if there's—"

"Here he is."

The boy's shrill voice sounded at the outer door.

"Mrs. Judd's pa—per."

"That's right, sonnie."

Mr. Billett brought the newspaper to the doorway, and stood there unfolding the double sheet.

"Would you, ma'am, grant me a glance at it? Yes—here we are. 'London's atrocious murder!'" and he began to read.

"Well," said a voice, "have they caught him?"



"Well? . . . Is this yer welcome 'ome? Mother! Aren't yer goin' ter kiss me?"

"Not yet. Would you, ma'am, allow me to read it out, for the benefit of all parties?"

"Cert'nly."

"It seems," read Mr. Billett, with careful elocution, "'that while Scotland Yard has been completely baffled——'"

"What price the p'lice now?" asked a derisive voice.

"Don't be in an 'urry," said Mr. Billett. "Give 'em time. They're watchin' and waitin'. It's like a mouse in a hole, and a cat watchin'. She doesn't make any mewin'. But when he shows himself, then *pounce!*"

"Go on with the print," said one of the voices.

"An important clue has been provided by a private individual."

"Brayvo, puss," and a mocking voice attempted to imitate a cat. "Meeow—Meeow!"

"The victim," Mr. Billett read on, loudly and pompously, "'is now practically identified as a sailor from a Montevideo cargo ship which has just left for the port of Hamburg. The evidence at the adjourned inquest to-day was of a shockin' description'" —Mr. Billett paused, looked round, and repeated with evident relish—"shockin' description. It would seem that the face was totally unrecognisable as a human visage."

"Oh, lor'!" said Mrs. Judd shudderingly.

"So that the whole ship's company, were they here, might be unable to swear to a late comrade. The unhappy creature was prob'ly struck down from the back, and then with unparalleled ferocity the head was lit'rally beaten to a pulp."

"Oh," said Mrs. Judd, "it's too dreadful!" and she hid her face in her hands, as if to



shut out the ugly vision that had been created by the newspaper report.

"'But the problem becomes the more difficult of solution——'"—Mr. Billett looked round with an air of proud satisfaction. "That's what I said. It's the problem—very word I used."

"Go on with the print," said a voice in subdued tones.

"'The myst'ry deepens. Here is a person of almost colossal statu'e and presoom—presoom'ble stren'th, done to death in a public and by no means unfrequented street within fifty yards of a main art'ry of traffic, I. and E. the Commercial Road——' Bin there meself a score o' times. 'Was the deed perpetrated by one man or by a gang? Was the motive plunder or revenge? It is like a crime woven by the morbid fancy of a sensashnal nov'list. One would say a horde o' madmen had broke loose, or demons possessed of power to render themselves invisible, or——'"

"Is that the print?" asked a voice, subdued now to a whisper.

"Yes," said Mr. Billett. "But he ain't got no more news. He runs on—embroidering like."

"Then that's enough of it."

"Yes," echoed Mrs. Judd, with conviction, "that's more'n enough. It's too horrible."

Mr. Billett refolded the paper, laid it on the table, and returned to the convivial company of the front room.

\* \* \* \* \*

Somehow or other the gaiety and light-heartedness of the assembled drinkers were evaporating. Mrs. Judd, stitching and listening musingly, heard no more laughter; the conversation had taken a serious turn; the voices, as they mingled, seemed to be sinking lower and lower towards a hushed solemnity of tone.

"Did you ever see the Tower Bridge from underneath?"

"No, I seen it from the train."

"There was a woman fell off it without hurting herself——"

"Oh, that's a good 'un."

"What took you there? The football match?"

"No, the guv'nor sent me to the ware-houses. . ."

Thus the talk proceeded, but it was no longer spontaneous and easy. A silence fell once or twice, and there was a perceptible effort in the voice of the speaker who started a fresh topic. It was very curious, but it seemed as if an oppression of mind had descended upon all in the front room;

and then soon it seemed as if the oppressive discomfort was spreading to the back room too.

Mrs. Judd got up, crossed to the fireplace, and put some coals on the fire.

"You're very quiet all at once," she said, turning towards the doorway.

No one answered; a silence had fallen. Mrs. Judd put on some more coals, dropped the shovel noisily, and went back to her table. Giving herself a shake, she sat down again and resumed her task.

"Well," said a voice, "I'll be saying 'Good night.'"

"Good night, Mr. Price. Excuse me a moment, gen'llemen."

Mr. Judd had appeared in the doorway, and he came to his wife's side.

"You're very quiet in there to-night."

"Yes—you notice too?"

"What's caused it? Mr. Billett's reading?"

"No," said Mr. Judd confidentially, "it's the man in the corner—him as come in last. We don't know him—and it's a damper."

"Is he unpleasant? I haven't heard any strange voice all evening."

"He hasn't spoken—just a damper. I wish he'd go."

Somebody called to the landlord, and he withdrew to fulfil the order.

"If I may trouble you again, Mr. Judd."

"Coming, Mr. Yates."

Left to herself, Mrs. Judd made a few thoughtful stitches; then she put down her work abruptly, got up, and, moving to the doorway, glanced into the taproom without showing herself to customers, old or new. Moving again, she softly drew a chair to the red-curtained window, stood upon the seat of the chair, and cautiously peered through the glass above the curtain. Then she returned to her table once more and picked up her work. But in a moment or two the work was again abandoned with a jerk, and she called to her husband sharply.

"Judd!"

"That's the missus calling you."

"What is it?" asked Mr. Judd, in the doorway.

"Come here—speak low. I took a peep, but I couldn't see him."

"No, I tell you he sits in the corner."

"D'you say he don't talk—at all?"

"Not a word."

"What's he had?"

"Three glasses."

"Has he paid?"

"No. He don't offer to pay or to go. He just sits there like a toad. And I see

the others feel it same as me. Can't talk jolly. I on'y wish he'd go."

Mrs. Judd whispered sharply and decisively.

"Tell him to go."

"Shall I?"

"Yes, you tell him to pay his score and clear out of this."

"Suppose he turns nasty?"

"Then make the excuse that you want to shut up. It is nigh on time. Let the lot go—and shut the door."

"Well, they're going a'ready—one after another."

"Don't stand here gaping. Do it; quick! Tell that man to go."

The landlord went to dismiss the unwelcome guest, and Mrs. Judd stood by her table, watching the doorway and listening intently. Her lips twitched nervously, and her hand, as it rested on the table, trembled.

"Ow goes the hour, eh?"

The little company was apparently breaking up; a cold breath of air came creeping in when somebody opened the street door; one heard a note of leave-taking in the low-pitched voices.

"They say"—that was Mr. Veal's voice, slow and grave—"they say there's bin more influenza of the sort there has bin this winter than what there *ever* has bin."

"Great deal o' sickness"—that was Mr. Carter's voice, low and solemn—"and, mind you, distress too—real distress—throughout the land."

"Good night, old boy."

"I'm on the move myself," said Mr. Billett.

"Good night to you."

Mrs. Judd, straining her ears, caught no sound of the stranger's voice.

"Well," she whispered anxiously, when her husband reappeared, "has he gone?"

Mr. Judd put his finger to his lips as he approached.

"Has he gone?"

"No."

"Did you tell him?"

"No. But I've been speaking to him. Listen. He asks this: May he sleep here? Any shake-down will do. And he'll pay handsome."

"No, no. Don't you let him stop." Mrs. Judd had shown sudden fear. She seized her husband's arm, dragging it to her; her face was white, and she trembled violently. "Get rid of him. Get rid of him quick, before all the others go. I'm scared."

"You needn't be afeared."

"It's the thought that come into my mind. Suppose it was *him* they read of—the *murderer*."

"Oh!" Mr. Judd was looking at his wife in blank surprise. He added very feebly: "That ain't likely—at all."

"You go back—quick! No time to lose."

"Gen'lemen," said Mr. Judd, hurrying into the taproom, "you'll excuse me, but it's time I shut up, if you please. What! Are you off already?"

The voices sounded in the street now, outside the taproom door. "Good night—good night, and good luck to you!" The voices were dying away; soon all was silence.

Mr. Judd returned, rubbing his hands and speaking with unfeigned cheerfulness.

"Don't be afeared. He's gone."

"Thank goodness! It scared me."

"Must have gone while I was talkin' to you."

"Thank goodness!" Mrs. Judd gave herself a shake. "That's what I say—thank goodness!"

"But he's sneaked off without paying."

"Never mind," cried Mrs. Judd vehemently. "I don't want that man's money. Now you shut up carefully," and she packed her work into the basket. "Draw them door-bolts full, and see the chain's fast."

From the taproom there came the noise of bolts and bars as the fastenings were adjusted.

"And put the rod firm across the shutter."

"That's firm enough," said Mr. Judd.

"Did you latch the window first?"

"Of course I did!"

Then Mr. Judd turned out the gas in the taproom and came back to the sitting-room. He laid his pipe on the mantelpiece, warmed his legs at the fire, and laughed.

"You *are* a one to get hold of rum ideas."

Mrs. Judd had picked up a bedroom candlestick and was about to light the candle, when suddenly she raised her hand, as if signalling to her husband to keep quiet.

"Ark!" she whispered. "What was that? I swear I 'eard something in there."

Judd moved hastily to his wife's side, and they both stood staring at the darkness behind the taproom window.

"What's that?"

It was a tinkling crash of broken glass somewhere in the darkness. A tumbler had fallen on the taproom floor.

"Wha—wha—what is it?" stammered Mr. Judd quaveringly.

There came a vague noise of movement; then more plainly, unmistakably heard,

someone moving in the darkness of the taproom.

"Look! Look!"

A man was standing in the doorway. A slouch hat concealed the upper part of his face, but his red beard, growing high to the cheek bones, gave him a fierce and terrible aspect. He seemed clumsy, loutish, stupid;

the man continued slowly and with a slight chuckle. "I pay my debts. You must let me stop here."

"Lis'n to me," said Mr. Judd, frightened but blustering. "You go straight to that door and draw the bolts and step out precious quick. You ought to be ashamed o' yourself."

"You can't turn me out. See? Because



"'For the love o' mercy wake 'im!' 'I—I can't! I—I daren't!'"

and he spoke deliberately and slowly, with a rather thick utterance, but not as if he was drunk.

"All right," said the man; "I 'adn't gone. I was 'id be'ind the bar."

"Then outside you go now," said Mr. Judd feebly.

"I 'adn't sneaked off without paying,"

I want rest. I'm a boner fidy trav'ler." The man took off his hat and came forward into the room. "And I'm your own son."

Mr. Judd and his wife had drawn away to the wall as the man advanced. They were staring at him fearfully.

"Tom? No! I don't recognise *you* as my son."

"'Adn't grown me beard, 'ad I? It's all right. You can prove me. I wrote and told you I was coming. Well, I'm back sooner than I expected."

Mrs. Judd moved a few steps nearer to the man, stared at his eyes, and spoke with a breathless falter.

"Where did you write from?"

"Rio der lar Plarter."

"Yes." Mrs. Judd took another step towards him. "Yes—but that's no proof."

"Prove me by the fam'ly hist'ry. . . . You buried two before I was born. My sister Loo, what followed me, died o' the scarlet fever. I left for foreign parts because I'd disgraced myself over the club money that was left in the till. . . . But what's the use? Mother, don't yer *know* I'm yer son?"

There was a pause; and then Mrs. Judd turned to her husband.

"Yes. It's Tom."

"Then what are you playing at?" Mr. Judd looked at the man half timidly, half angrily, and, bringing out a handkerchief, wiped the perspiration from his forehead. "Where's the fun of scaring people? Why couldn't you announce yerself like a reas'nable being?"

"Didn't want to be messing about with a pack of strangers. . . . I'm a bit queer. See? . . . But I was all right when I wrote. I was all right till I left Montevideo."

Mrs. Judd started and drew back.

"Montyvidyer!"

Mr. Judd echoed the word meaninglessly.

"Montyvidyer."

"When you been to Montyvidyer?" asked Mrs. Judd in a shaky voice. "That's not the place you said. Lar Plarter?"

"Same thing. That's the river. Montevideo's the city." The man put his hand to his brow, and spoke with a dreamy air. "It's a grand city—Mon-te-vid-yo. . . ." He dropped his hand and turned to Mrs. Judd with surly anger. "What yer looking at me like that? What's the matter with you?"

Mrs. Judd had drawn right away to the wall again; there was horror as well as fear in her staring eyes; her lips were twitching.

"Well? . . . Is this yer welcome 'ome? . . . Mother! Aren't yer goin' ter kiss me?"

There was a brief silence. Then Mrs. Judd shook herself, as if making a final successful effort to shake off the dark fears that oppressed her.

"Yes, of course I'm goin' ter kiss yer." She came from the wall, embraced her son, and, with her arms round his neck, began to cry. "My boy! My own boy!"

"That's all right"; and the son offered his hand to Mr. Judd. "Father!"

"How are yer?" and Mr. Judd shook hands. "Will you have another drink?"

"No. I mustn't drink. I tell you I'm queer—queer about the 'ead. Felt so dazed I could scarce find me way 'ome 'ere."

"Is that so?" Mr. Judd looked at his wife, who made a sign and whispered a few words to him. "I say. I think I best fetch the doctor to *you*. Dr. Page! Just acrost the road"; and he moved towards the door. "He won't be gone to bed. He's a late bird—Dr. Page."

The son moved clumsily and intercepted him.

"No. You mustn't do that. I've seen a doctor, and I told him how it was. Bin pretty near choked—and then the injury to the 'ead." He looked at his parents stupidly and dreamily; then roused himself, as if trying to continue, but forgetting what he intended to say. "Yes, that's it. The doctor tells me: 'You're very queer, my frien'.' See? 'Take care,' he says, 'or you'll go off in a fit, and no doctors won't pull you out of that!'"

He went to the hearth, drew the armchair before the fire, and put another chair by it to form his couch.

"I've money in my pockets, but I'm in trouble. See? I'm going on first thing morning'." He said this slowly and dreamily. "Let me sleep and let me go. What yer lookin' at me, mother? Want to hear my story, eh?" With an exertion he roused himself again to continue speaking. "Montevideo's a grand city—so's the river. Wonderful place." He stood staring in front of him; then once again roused himself. "You'd like to hear my story. Well, it's a wonderful place. Paradise for a sailorman—with money in his pockets. There's the drinking-saloons by the water, and these tambreen gals—Spanish half-breeds—dancing while you lap down yer liquor. Different from this set-out," and he waved his arm in the direction of the taproom. "'Andsome and bright as parakeets—them tambreen gals," and he snapped his fingers. "Chikeeta! Chikeeta!"

He shuffled his feet, moved his hands as if beating a tambourine, and sang an unmelodious snatch of song. Then he stared in front of him fixedly; and there was a long silence before he went on dreamily—

"I wish I was in Montevideo now. That's where I wish I was now—down by the water, but out of the sunshine."

Mrs. Judd had gone back to her table. She stood motionless, listening fearfully. Mr. Judd was at her side, by the table, listening stolidly and stupidly.

"Roughest lot ever I shipped with—and one as bullied me. Brought his grudge aboard with 'im." The man dropped his voice to a low grumble. "Bullying devil! Thinks he'd choke me—out me in my bunk. See?" He put his hands to his throat, and gasped and grunted as if he really felt suffocation. "But they pulls him off of me. Next time he goes for me with an iron bolt"—and he put his hands to his head—"something cruel." Then he added dreamily: "You didn't ought to hit a man with iron—— So that's my story, mother," and he sat down in the armchair and stretched his legs upon the other chair.

"I'm dead beat. You must let me sleep. And you must watch and wake me. Rouse me at daylight. I must go on," and he was about to settle himself in the chair when he looked round quickly. "See, though. Wake me if I dream. Don't let me dream. I've been dreaming ever since. Promise you'll wake me if I dream?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Judd in a dry, husky whisper, "I promise."

The man lay back in the armchair and almost immediately fell asleep. For a little while Mrs. Judd stood by her table watching him. Mr. Judd looked at her stupidly.

"Should I turn out the gas?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Judd; "no. Turn it down—not out. Do it soft—so's not to disturb him."

Mr. Judd obeyed her, then pulled a chair to the table and sat down, making a slight rattling noise as his hand blundered against the tray and jug.

"Shush!"

She took a shawl, slowly crossed to the sleeping man, and softly put it over his chest. In all her movements she showed dread and fear of the man. Watching him apprehensively, she knelt on the hearth and replenished the fire, picking the lumps of coal from the scuttle with her fingers, making no noise. She remained kneeling till the fire began to burn brighter, to light up the figure of the sleeper, to throw monstrous shadows on the ceiling and the wall. Then she rose from her knees, went back to her chair, and, leaning her elbows on the table, hid her face in her hands.

The minutes dragged slowly and heavily. Not a sound now broke the silence except

the crisp ticking of the clock and the stertorous breathing of the man.

"'Ark?"

The man was faintly muttering in his sleep.

"Chikeeta...chikeeta."

He muttered indistinctly, but one could catch a sentence here and there among the confused series of words.

"Chikeeta... All tambrean gals the same. She's my gal... Yes—my gal."

"He's on the dream," said Mrs. Judd. "Go and wake 'im."

"Wake 'im so soon?"

"Yes, now."

Mr. Judd got up, went across to the fire, and stood by the man's side. The man muttered again.

"Do as I tell you. Wake 'im."

Mr. Judd laid his hand on the man's shoulder.

"Look 'ere. Yer mother says time to wake up."

Then the man spoke loudly and distinctly.

"Let me and my gal alone. See? My gal—an' me—my gal."

"'Ere, stop it!" Mr. Judd shook the man's shoulder. "Wake up!"

"Let me alone!" said the man loudly and snarlingly. "Let me alone, I say!" and he threw off the shawl that covered his shoulders.

Mr. Judd drew back alarmed; and his wife, springing from her chair, came and seized the man's left hand.

"Wake!" she cried. "It's I—your own mother! There's something wrong with his sleeping like this. Wake, can't you?" and she pulled at his hand violently.

The man slowly released his hand and pressed it against his breast, leaned forward in the chair, and went on talking. His eyes were still shut.

"No more your gal than my gal."

He spoke these words with an appalling fierceness; and Mrs. Judd shrank away from him, terrified.

"Son of a dog, am I?" He was speaking with increasing passion as he went on. "Monkey-face, am I? If I am, *she* don't mind. She's chosen her monkey. See?" And his voice subsided again to indistinct mutterings.

Mrs. Judd in her terror had got behind the table; she was leaning on the table for support, as though all strength had gone from her knees.

"For the love o' mercy, wake 'im!"

"I—I can't! I—I daren't!"

Mrs. Judd frantically swept the tray, the



“‘Answer back now. Now who’s Monkey-face? Why, your own mother wouldn’t know you now.’”



jug, and the glass off the table, and they fell with a clatter and a smash.

"Wake! Why don't you wake?"

"Look 'ere, I—I'll fetch the doctor."

"No, no; don't leave me alone with him!"

And the terrified woman clutched at her husband's arm. "I can't bear it. Yes—yes I can. Fetch Dr. Page—bring Dr. Page to wake 'im."

Her husband rushed through the tap-room, noisily drew the bolts of the outer door, and ran into the street, leaving the door open behind him.

The cold air crept into the warm room and seemed to freeze one's blood; the flames flickered behind the bars of the grate, lighting up the sleeper's face and his closed eyes, making fantastic shadows dance behind him on the wall; in the silence the ticking of the clock sounded like heavy, bursting heartbeats. Then the silence was broken; the man began to speak again.

"I'm not afraid of you, ashore or afloat! You don't put fear into me on land or sea—bullying devil!"

"Wake!"

Mrs. Judd came from behind the table and took two steps towards the dreaming man, as if she intended to try once more to rouse him. But her fear was too great. She stopped, with her hand on the table, as if paralysed by terror.

"Take your hands from me throat!"

He had lifted his hands to his neck, was struggling in the chair. He pulled at his scarf, gasped and spluttered, as though choking. "Let me go! Let go o' me!" He sank back on the chair, panting. "Thank ye, mates. Thank you kindly. He near done me that time."

"Wake!"

He was slowly coming forward in the chair.

"See 'ere, ye swab! This don't end it; I'll pay you when we get ashore. I pay my debts. . . . Ye'll call me son of a dog! All right; but I'll pay you back. I'll swing for it, but I'll pay you!"

"Wake!" The word came in a shrill scream of terror. "Wake!"

"There he goes—There he goes. . . ." He was whispering now; and, as he whispered, he raised himself, leaning right forward and pointing with an outstretched hand.

"There—there he goes"; and his eyes opened and he stared in front of him. The eyes were glassy, glittering, most horrible to watch in the silence while one waited with shuddering awe for the voice.

"Take that! Take that!"

The voice had sounded loud and strong, bestially ferocious, and the dreamer was stooping from the chair and looking down at the floor.

"Where's your answer now? Speak up now. . . . There's more"; and he made violent, frightful gestures with the right hand. "There's more for you!" he gasped. "And more, and more. . . . That's how I pay my debts."

He was breathless, panting; and, as he looked down at the floor, the words came in a low, snarling rage.

"Answer back now. Now who's Monkey-face? Why, your own mother wouldn't know you now. . . ."

He drew back into the chair suddenly, shivering and gasping.

"No, no—not the dead man. Dead men can't—can't—can't!" . . .

He raised both hands to his head with a swift motion, and dropped back in the chair. Then his arms fell, hanging loosely; his head sank upon his left shoulder, and he lay quite still.

\* \* \* \* \*

"'Ere,—this way—this way. 'Ere's 'elp at last."

Mr. Judd came hurrying through the tap-room, followed by the doctor.

Mrs. Judd stood by her table, unable to move, scarcely able to speak, in a frenzy of horror. Mr. Judd had turned up the gas, and brought a lighted candle to the doctor. The doctor was stooping over the man, lifting his head, scrutinising his eyes, feeling his breast.

"Wake 'im! Oh, wake 'im!"

The doctor, looking round, spoke gravely.

"No one can wake him now. He will never wake."

"Dead?"

"Yes."

Mrs. Judd stepped forward, dropped upon her knees, and raised her arms.

"Thank God! Thank God for that!"

And, sobbing and shaking, she covered her face with her hands.

# THE CHRISTMAS-TREE.

BY AGNES GROZIER HERBERTSON.



ARKNESS was coming on, and all the torches were lighted; but the market-place was still crowded. People pressed to and fro. To pass quickly down the middle of the market-place was

not easy; but to hasten on the pavement was impossible. Buyers were tightly wedged between the rows of stalls against the kerbs and the shop-windows on the other side of the pavement.

Many of the stalls were almost empty. The corner stall in the centre of the market, in the morning brilliant with flowers, orange, crimson, and flaming red, was now bare but for a mass of holly and a pot containing a great lemon-yellow chrysanthemum which curled up its petals as if it shrank from the creeping mist. Most of these central stalls held flowers and plants and green stuff for decorations. Near the pale chrysanthemum stood a stall hung round with huge bunches of mistletoe and holly; the torches flamed out from among the dark green masses like flowers of brilliant fire. The next stall held but a few scattered plants, and, lying on its counter, a little holly cross.

Across the square, and near the pavement, a man stood, a short, broad-shouldered fellow, calling attention to his wares. The booth in front of him was longer and narrower than its fellows, and was still heaped high with articles for sale. The vendor's voice rose, harsh and lusty: "A penny!—every one of the lot a penny! You git here what you won't git nowheer else in the market—a hundred different articles, and none of 'em more'n a penny!"

A little company of children stood round the booth, their heads craned forward like young birds. This was a toy-stall.

There were bright balls on it, tinsel fruits, dolls, trumpets, and whistles. There were tiny packets of crackers, yellow fluffy chickens, horses with manes—beautifully

carved—great painted butterflies whose wings chabged in a dozen lights. The pencils were too beautiful for use: they were just to long for and possess; the pens were even finer; there were enchanting note-books with borders of ivy leaves. Dishes: tea-dishes, dinner-dishes, dishes for cooking, and wooden platters and pans; these lay here and there and cried to one to buy. There was a horn tied about with bright red worsted and an engine with two carriages behind. In one corner, a very pyramid of splendour, rose glass boxes crammed with sparkling beads and rimmed round with gold. There was a fairy too, who swayed on a string and shook her wings. You knew you had only to put her on the Christmas-tree, and it would be the finest ever seen.

And there were a hundred things besides.

The children missed none of them. Their bright eyes roved from treasure to treasure. Sometimes a voice uprose, like the chirp of a young sparrow; the vendor ceased his lusty crying, a sixpence was proffered to him, and a parcel carried away. Sometimes a penny only was given. He seemed almost as well pleased.

The little crowd changed from time to time. Eager faces advanced, happy ones turned away. But at a corner of the stall were two small figures, seemingly unable to purchase or to go away unsatisfied. Poor children, apparently: the boy's blue jacket had rents in it and the girl's jersey was in holes. Their faces were thin and their bodies stunted; but the eyes of both were darting, eager, alight. They roved over the mass of colour and shimmer as if they could never see enough.

The vendor's eye fell upon the couple, at the end of a long exhortation. He asked: "Ain't you a-going to buy?" A strand of coarse hair fell over his forehead, he shook it back. It fluffed up against his cap; he was like some tufted bird.

The girl caught at her companion's arm. She said, in a nervous whisper: "Let's git 'em now, Ted—the paint-box for you, the engine for Alfred, the tea-set for Daisy, and the fairy for me."

The boy hesitated.

"'Tis one present each; we counted as we could git one present each," she pleaded.

The owner of the stall turned away to hail a passer-by.

The boy unclenched his fist warily, and the torches' light fell on a tight heap of coins. The two children stared at them, undecided. "One and tuppence," the boy said, "and we *must* have candles. Them in the green boxes at Smith's is fourpence."

"Fourpence for candles, and fourpence for presents," she counted greedily. "There'd be sixpence left for the tree."

"S'posing—s'posing there ain't a tree for sixpence?"

"In th' market——" she faltered.

But the boy closed his stiff fingers over the coins and drew her away. "Let's go fust and git the tree."

They crossed to the central stalls and made a quick pilgrimage. The chrysanthemum beckoned them alluringly, but a glimpse of its lemon-coloured blossoms sent them away with scornful eyes. They passed the holly-stall with a backward glance. The owner of the pot-plants was standing by his emptying shelves. They asked him timidly if he had a Christmas-tree. He said, smiling, rubbing his cold hands against his sides: "You be late in th' day. I had that there space full this morning, but they be all sold."

Other stalls had nothing left but cut blossoms, and the last one of all was empty.

"There ain't nary a tree," said the boy mournfully.

"No," said the girl. The rime in the air pinched her pale face and made her eyes lustrous. She gazed over the market. "There's a man as stands by the corner there, but I can't see him to-day."

The boy said desolately: "No, he's gone. I s'pose he's sold all his Chrismis-trees."

"Twas a pity," said the girl, "that mother had to borrow that money, and couldn't give it us back till to-night."

"Yes," he agreed. His glance travelled back to the stall strung round with holly, which was near the chrysanthemum. He said slowly: "They *might* have one there—there was summat green at the back."

They plodded back, with faces pale with hope.

The man had one. It had been forgotten, his wife had imagined it to be sold. He brought it out and set it on the ground. The tree spread out its mystic branches. There was frost among them: it glittered like the radiance of some unseen light.

"A shilling," said the man in a matter-of-fact tone. Somebody called him: he went away.

His wife came out. She looked at their faces, the boy's dogged, the girl's elfish and yearning and framed round with rats'-tails of hair.

"You kin have it for ninepence," she said. She stared across at the china-stall where a man was running out a long series of basins, one from within another, as if demonstrating some magic trick. There was a brusque finality in her tone.

"We *must* have candles," muttered the boy under his breath.

"And presents," breathed the girl.

He shook his head.

"Ted! P'raps we'd git a tree for sixpence in the shops."

"They ain't as cheap there as in th' market."

They looked at each other in despair.

"Way there—look out!" The man came bustling back. He waved the children aside. A trap, coming slowly through the market-place, had drawn up by the stall. A man and a woman sat in it, very young, and dressed sombrely in black. When the woman leant forward, her cheeks showed pink and full, the cheeks of a girl, and wet as if she had been crying. She breathed eagerly: "Yes, Hugh, it is! It is a Christmas-tree."

"The last one," said the man from the stall. "There ain't another to be had."

The young fellow coughed a little huskily. "How much is it?" he asked.

"A shilling—and 'tis the last."

The youth—he was no more—looked back at the girl. She nodded. As the vendor took the tree away to put paper round the pot, she whispered: "We'll take it down to her on Christmas Day. Perhaps, if we plant it there—on the grave" (her voice hushed) "it will grow." Tears welled into her eyes.

He said softly "Yes."

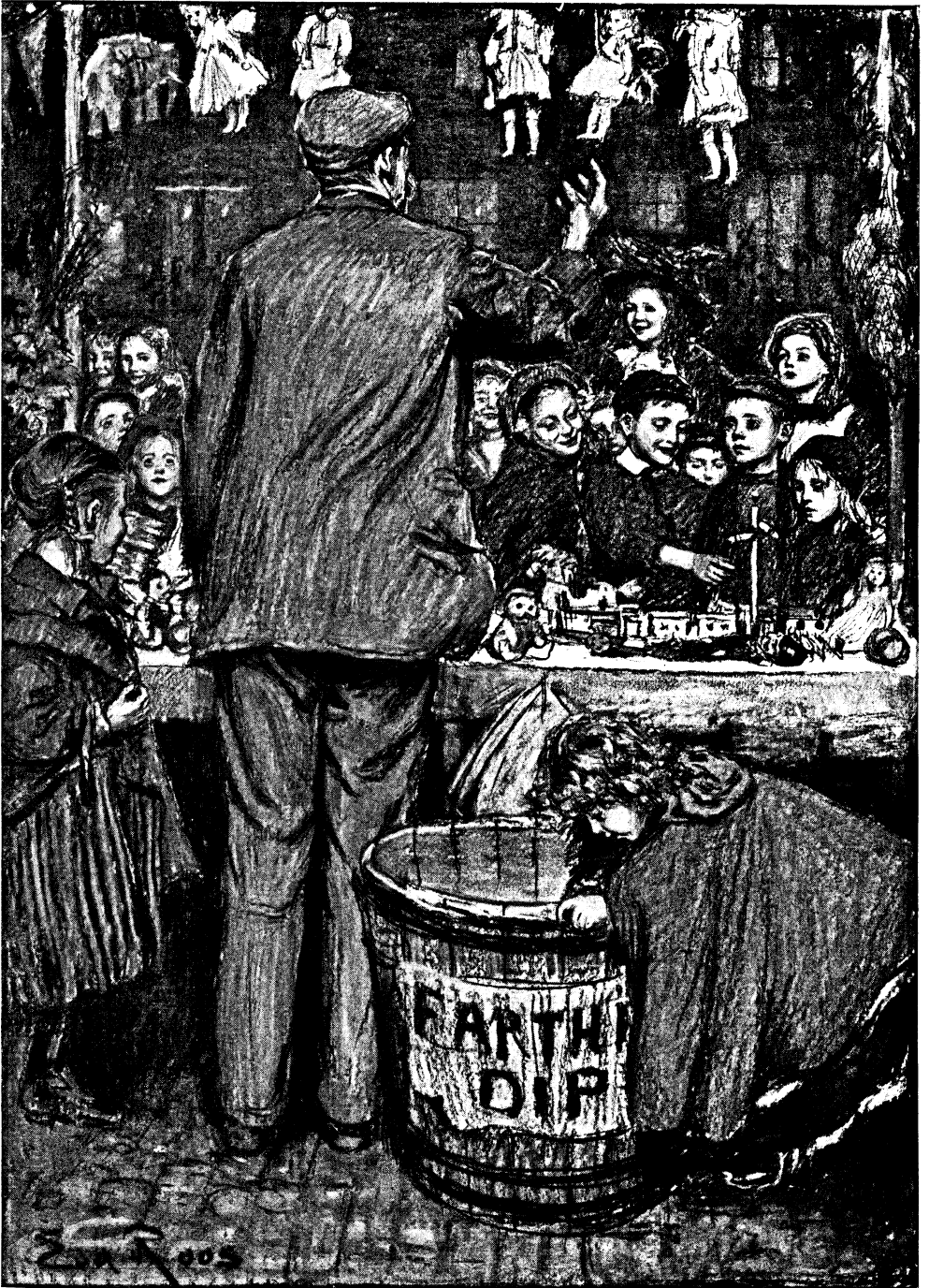
The man brought back the tree. The shilling was paid. The youth leant from the trap to receive the pot. The little boughs of the tree scraped against his cheek.

The two children had been standing watching, dazed. At that moment the girl burst into tears.

The youth in the trap looked down at them; his wife leant her head against him. "Poor little things! What is the matter?" she asked.

Her voice was like a caress.

"'Twas our tree," sobbed the child.



“At a corner of the stall were two small figures, seemingly unable to purchase or to go away unsatisfied.”

"We had a'most bought it, for ninepence; we didn't count to give as much, 'cause of the candles; but we were jist a-going to say we would," the boy explained. He stared up at them, his face pale, his eyes aghast with sorrow and dismay.

"I said as they could have it for ninepence: they didn't seem able to make up their minds," the stall-woman explained.

Her husband looked black. "It's sold now," he said roughly.

"Poor dears!" said the woman. "Give 'em a bit of holly, Bill. They'll feel better if they has a bit o' holly." She motioned him towards the great clusters at the back of the stall.

The young fellow in the trap hesitated, the tree still in his hands. He glanced at his wife. She smiled at him waveringly. "Yes, give it to them," she said.

It was the claims of the living against those of the dead, he thought, and his face worked. He bent low. "Here," he called to the weeping child, "take your Christmas-tree."

She took it from him, her sobs dying away.

"Here's the shilling, sir," said the boy.

He shook his head. "Keep it."

Sitting erect in the trap, they watched the children press gladly away. The girl still carried the Christmas-tree, the boy talked excitedly, his money held fast in his hand. They were making for the toy-stall.

The young husband turned to his wife. Her eyes, too, had wandered. They were resting sadly on the little holly wreath.

"That?" he questioned her.

She shuddered. "No, not that." Her glance fell, her eyes filled with tears.

He looked aside, caught sight of the lemon chrysanthemum stretching out its pale, sweet blooms. "Hilda——" he said.

She looked. Her eye, too, was caught, and steadied.

"Yes," she said slowly, "let us buy it for her. It is fresh, and sweet, and fair." She was thinking of the child she had lost. She bent her head. "It has nothing to do with death," she said.





"THE PRAISE OF SPRING." BY GEORGE WETHERBEE, R.I.

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## THE PAGEANT OF THE YEAR.

BY S. L. BENSUSAN.

YEAR in and year out, a silent host that pays no tribute to sentiment honours these islands. Those who have gone far afield to serve their country, or make their fortunes, return, their labours done, to pass what remains to them of life in the land that gave them birth. There is something more than patriotism in the return of those whose friends have passed, whose interests are alien. They have tired of the unvarying splendour of the East or the South, they have surfeited on sunshine, they know that, for all its faults, there is no country so supremely beautiful in its every aspect as Great Britain, and that the rain is responsible for no small part of its beauty. To the lovers of the country, every month has its attraction. They say with Coleridge—

All seasons shall be sweet to thee,  
Whether the summer clothe the general earth  
With greenness, or the redbreast sit and sing  
Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch.

The redbreast! Surely his is the most distinctive call heard by the opening year.

In January, "when fields are dank and ways are mire," his song seems to tell us that the days are hastening towards the season of light and sunshine. To be sure, the storm cock, as the mistle thrush is called by country-folk, sings loudly from leafless boughs, and the blackbird whistles on sunny days, but the robin's song is sweetest. There is no more welcome songster than "the pious bird with the scarlet breast," none whose optimism is more defiant of frost and snow, hail and wind, whose appointed purpose we find it hard to accept with resignation.

A gloomy month is January to those who will not look closely at her promise of better times to come, seen clearly enough when the furze breaks into early flower, and lambs are born in sheltered places, and the flower-buds on the elm are visible in the brief hours of strong light.

February bears no fair reputation, but for all its hard rule and reputation as a fill-dyke, it brings delightful hours in its train. It is the month of the crocus, it sets the





"THE SPRING OF LIFE" (ALSO TITLED "IN AN ORCHARD"). BY FREDERICK WALKER.

*In the collection of J. P. Heseltine, Esq.*

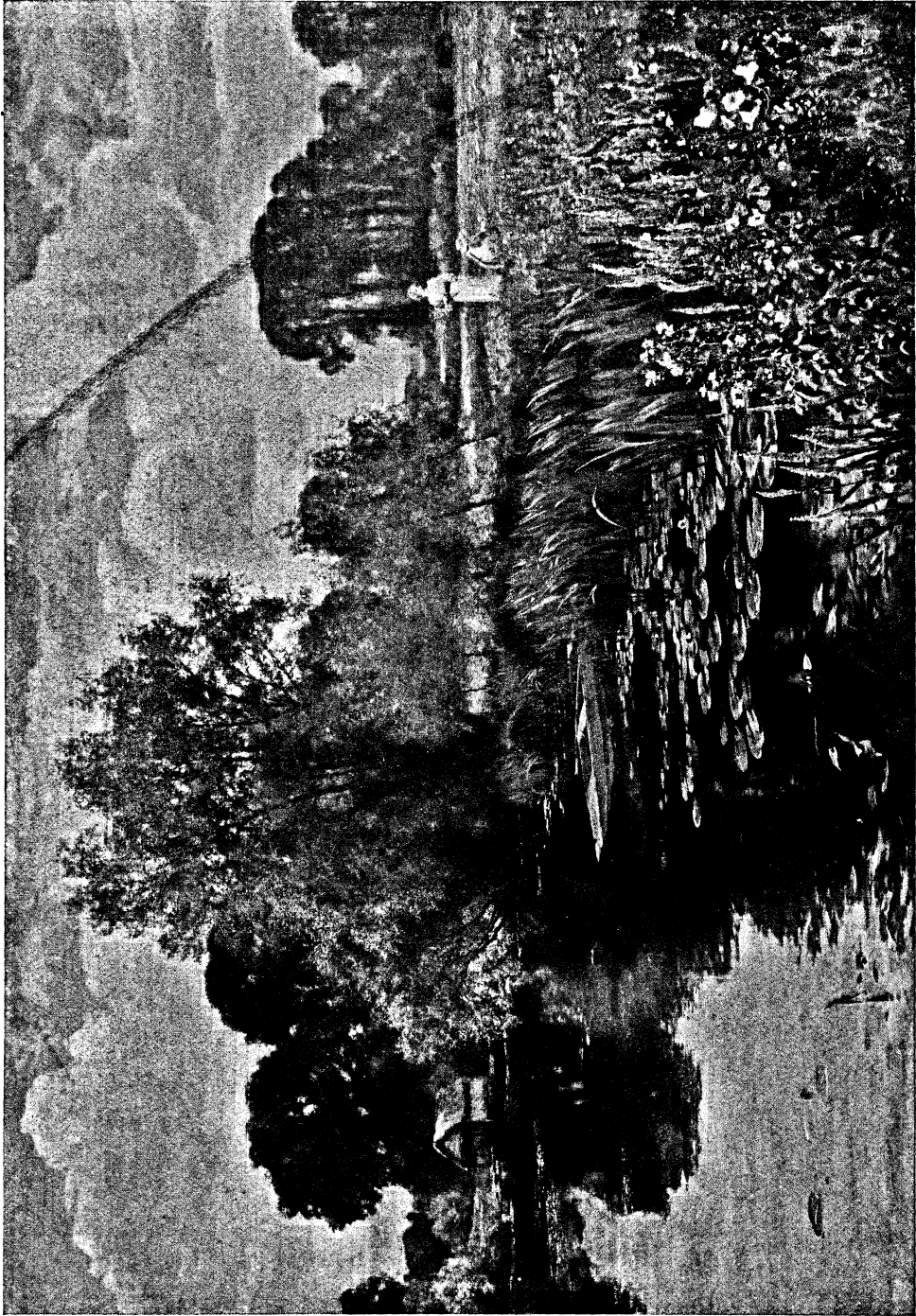
partridges mating, in its light the flocks of green plover begin to break up and think of love flights. Fish are calling the anglers. Some of the winter migrants are already on the wing, conscious of the changing year; and in the plantations the winter blackness is yielding to the tinge of grey that will presently become bright. Indeed, the tops of the larches are already showing green,

and the hazel has hung out its tasselled catkins or crimson tufts of the clusters that will bear nuts in the later year. And before February has lived her short life, the nights have shortened perceptibly, and the mornings are filled with mysterious freshness, the freshness of a new season. Bird song assumes a fresh significance; mating-time is coming. Sunset and sunrise are of rarest beauty; they



"THE MORNING OF THE YEAR." BY LUCY KEMP-WELCH.

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"RIVER BANKS AND RIVER BLOSSOMS." BY YEEND KING.  
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atone for the comparative lack of colour in the land they light. Well might the month declare—

My fairest flowers are in the sky,  
Wild red at morn; no damask rose  
More sweetly blows.

With March the reign of winter is over. The careless blackbird will not wait for protecting greenery, his nest lies open to every prying eye. Everywhere there are yellow flowers—golden-starred coltsfoot,

The rookery proclaims the spring, and in the far north the raven's nest is tenanted. Even the wind has a new sound; the tree-tops are taking a covering to themselves, and they give the wind a softer note than they could when their branches all were bare. Even a butterfly or two may come out in March, and the bees are active among the Easter palms. All through the winter the country-lover has waited for this hour, even though he be well pleased with cold,



"SUMMER-TIME IN THE HIGHLANDS." BY WILLIAM SMALL.

*From the original in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, reproduced by permission of the Corporation of Liverpool.*

March marigolds, daffodils "that come before the swallow dares, and take the winds of March with beauty." But the swallow is not always far behind: he has been known to arrive in England in March, when the season has been exceptionally forward. Now the black-grey of the woodlands is turning to grey-green. Nature seems to be preparing the land for the advent of April. There is a touch of spring in the wind, and—

Where the spring wind blows over the pleasant places,  
The same loved flowers lift up the same loved faces.

fine days and tolerant of the fashion in which Nature sweeps and garnishes the bare earth. At the end of March we see the pleasant months ahead of us for the next half-year. We may look for warmth and sunshine, nor shall we always look in vain.

If one tried to set down but a few of the exquisite thoughts that April has inspired, a volume of this magazine would hardly suffice. They range from the Bible to the work of modern poets. Surely the beautiful



passage in the Song of Songs was inspired by April—

For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone ;  
The flowers appear on the earth, the time of the  
singing of birds is come.

And here we have the late W. E. Henley in  
April mood—

O the larks in the blue—  
How the song of them glitters and glances and  
gleams !  
The old music sounds new.

of the orchard, where apple and pear, plum  
and cherry, should be aflower ; half-way  
through the month we find ourselves listen-  
ing for the nightingale and the cuckoo, called  
by Wordsworth—

No bird, but an invisible thing—  
A voice, a mystery.

Day by day wood and copse change colour ;  
buds swell and break and flower ; bird song  
is not only loud and prolonged, but is full of



"THE CAPTIVE BUTTERFLY." BY EDWARD A. HORNEL.

*From the original in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, reproduced by permission of the Corporation of Liverpool.*

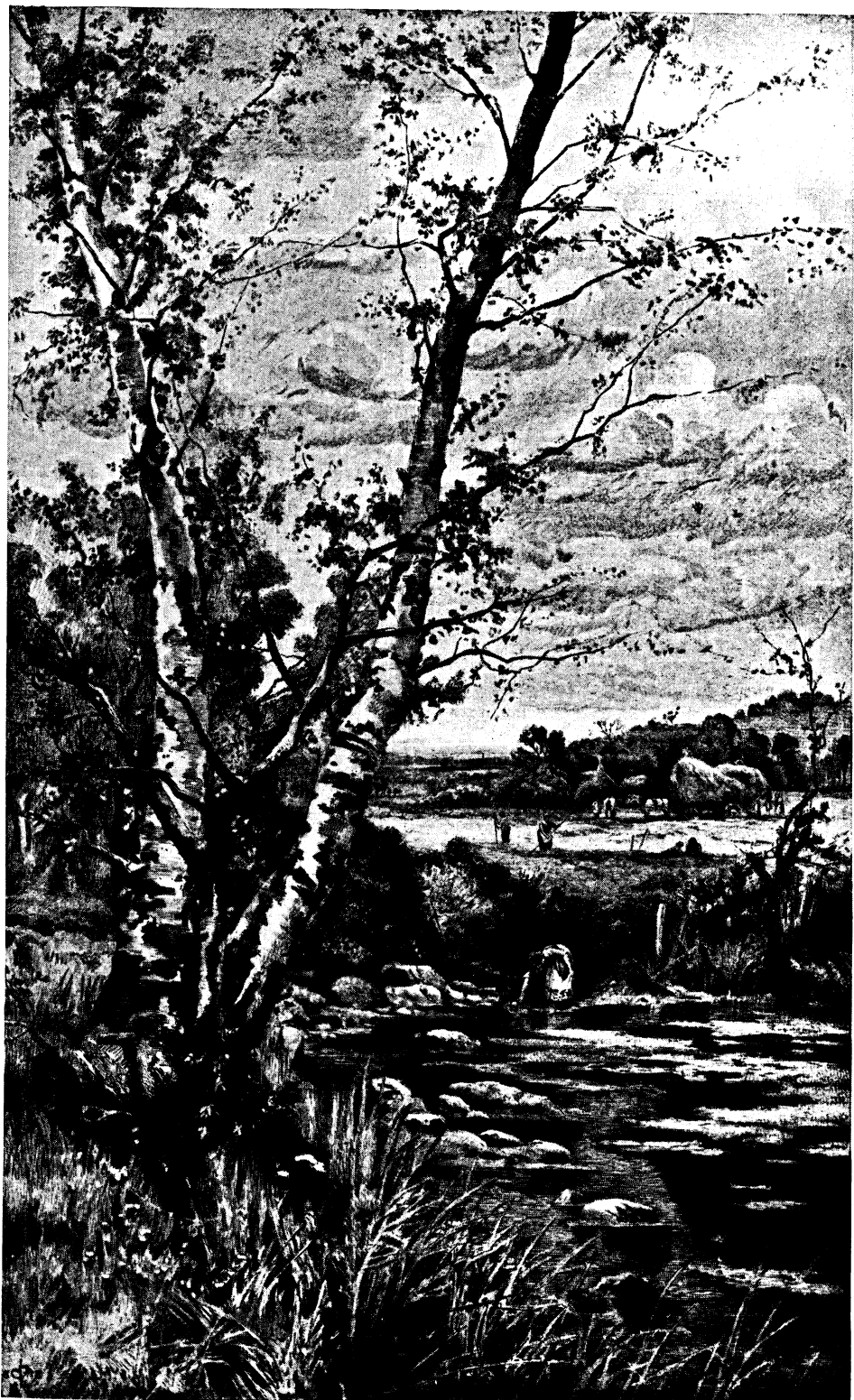
Between the two writers, what a rare procession of April-lovers has passed from speech to silence—Shakespeare, Spenser, Wordsworth, Robert Browning (whose lyric beginning—

O to be in England now that April's there!

will never be forgotten), Swinburne, William Morris, Tennyson—the list could be prolonged indefinitely. April is the month in which, under favourable conditions, the forces of winter are driven from the field. In place of snow, we have the white blossoms

the undertone of happiness that the dullest ear can hardly fail to catch. Primroses, violets, wood-sorrel, bluebells, wood anemones, and countless other flowers are everywhere.

But if April is supremely beautiful, what shall be said for May, when the lilac and the laburnum flower, and the glow-worm lights her little lamp by night, and bird song is well-nigh ceaseless, and the suggestion of summer warmth fills all the countryside? Every field and lane and woodland way sends its forgotten flowers to greet the sunshine ;



"SUMMER." BY CHARLES F. ALLBON.

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Flags and Comfrey flower by the water-side, with Ragged Robin and Crane's Bill for companions. Vetches are adding their note of colour to the fields, the wild parsley has risen high, buttercups throng the meadows, and in the brake the ferns have grown apace. If the sun will but shine, May cannot but be beautiful; and there is hardly an hour of the day or night when one would not willingly be awake—

But what is so rare as a day in June?  
Then, if ever, come perfect days.

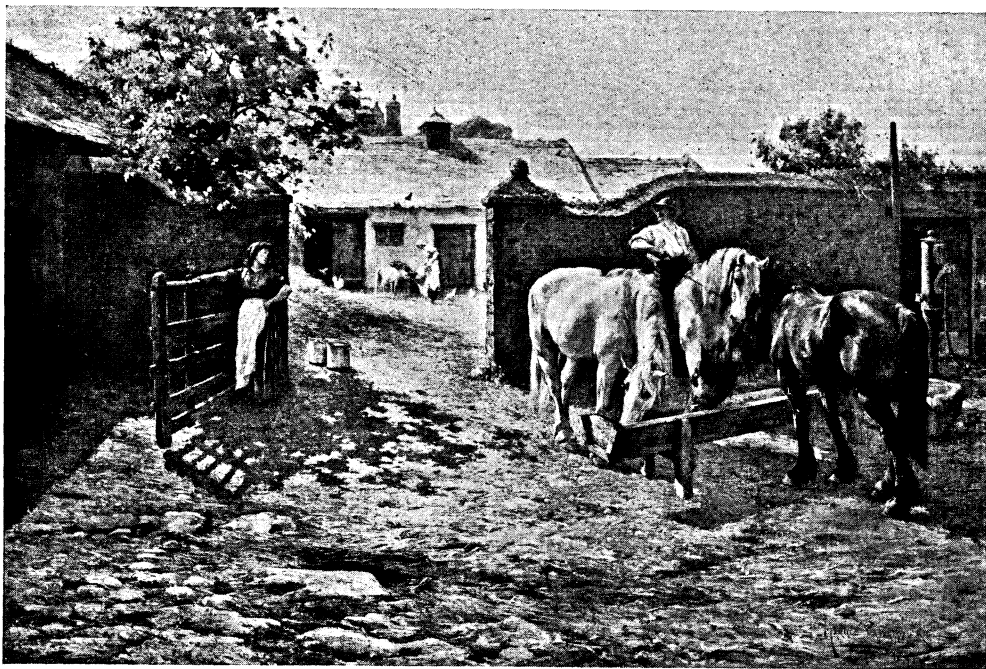
So sang another poet, and, indeed, there is but one thought to detract from our perfect

June is beautiful from dawn to dusk, from dusk again to dawn, the season of the most pleasant summer work, the pea-picking, the hay harvest.

July, full of the very richness of the summer, well nigh baffles us. Nature is too lavish, the feast that she has spread is all too bountiful—

And all the world's a garden,  
With summer to and fro.

Now is the season of the full honey-flow, when the bees work among the brightly coloured flowers by day and among the heavily scented white flowers by night, when



"A SUMMER DAY IN JUNE." BY HAROLD SWANWICK, R.I.

*From the original in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, reproduced by permission of the Corporation of Liverpool.*

enjoyment of the midsummer month—the thought that the spring months have gone, and none may follow to “where the lost Aprils are and the lost Mays.”

June is the month of roses, immortalised by men whose words one loves to dwell upon. Swinburne's “Year of the Rose” is, perhaps, one of the poems that lingers longest in the memory—

How red was the reign of the roses,  
Over the rose-crowned land!

In the red rose land not a mile  
Of the meadows from stile to stile,  
Of the valleys from stream to stream,  
But the air was a long sweet dream,  
And the earth was a sweet wide smile.

privet blooms and poppies rise scarlet amid the corn. But amid all the lavish splendour of the month signs are not wanting that summer has well-nigh fulfilled her mission. Cuckoo and nightingale are silent, and many another bird whose note is less familiar has hushed the song that was heard at its best when there was a mate to woo. The countryman must always feel a little sympathy for the townsman who sees the English country only in July, August, and September, and has not watched its beauty in the making. For of the beauty in the working there is no end.

August comes in splendid guise to the



"JOYOUS JUNE." BY ERNEST PARTON.

*From the original in the collection of R. Petre, Esq.*

northern counties and Scotland, purpling the heather, stripping the last patches of "velvet" from the antlers of the red deer, bringing the gunners to the corries in the deer-forests and to the thickly clad moorland, there to hide behind the butts until the one game bird that belongs exclusively to these islands, *Lagopus Scoticus*, the red

grouse, comes sailing over the guns. For a little while Caledonia forgets that she is "stern and wild," even though she seldom forgets to test the waterproof quality of her visitors' clothing.

In the south, August, to so many of us the most pleasant month of the year, brings to most of the birds and beasts in our countryside



"AUTUMN." BY FREDERICK WALKER.

*Reproduced from the large etching published by Messrs. Thomas Agnew & Sons, Old Bond Street, W.*

the reign of terror. We admire the golden colour of fields ripe for harvest, the sight of the reaping-machines, the sounds and scents of late summer. But to the life that has gathered in the depths of the corn, to the partridges, pheasants, rabbits, hares, field mice, landrills, and the rest it is a season of confusion or disaster, a time when the sanctuary that spring called into existence and summer built up is ruthlessly destroyed.

It is a season of mourning for fur and feather, and as though to emphasise this truth, most of our song-birds are silent, bees begin to cease from their labours, and the drones are driven out to their death. The farmlands delight the stranger's eye, the countryside breathes peace and contentment; but when the farmer rides abroad and finds the wind in the wrong quarter, or sees his corn standing wet in the shocks, we may know



"THE WEST WIND." BY J. L. PICKERING.  
*Reproduced by permission of the Artist.*



that Horace was right for all time when he wrote: "Black Care rides ever behind the horseman." August witnesses the beginning of the double migration—many birds that came in April are now preparing to return to milder climes, while others, reared in the sterner north, arrive to find a comparatively favourable winter in our midst.

September brings the sportsman to the southern land. Cub-hunting is in full progress, duck-shooting has been an attraction for weeks past, and now "the little brown bird" must fall on the stubble to which he turned to feed, finding consolation when the corn that had sheltered his early dis-

the firstlings of another year. The last fruit is taken into store, the ploughman toils over the stubble behind his smoking team, a long trail of rooks or seagulls, or both, following him. Trees and creepers give deep touches of crimson, orange, and gold to the leaves that must fall before November winds. The summer migrants have gone, the winter migrants are coming in on the wings of every favouring wind. And one morning we find that "russet-clad November" has arrived overnight.

The pale, fierce heavens are crowded  
With shapes like dreams beclouded,  
As though the old year enshrouded  
Lay, long ere life were done.



"CORNFIELDS NEAR ARUNDEL." BY R. THORNE WAITE.

*Reproduced by permission of the Artist.*

appeared from sight. Slowly but surely the woodlands change their colours,

Scarlet hosts of maple trees, the torches of the year,  
Burn low.

Then comes October, "season of mists and mellow fruitfulness," when all the game that runs or flies is in season, though most of the pheasants will probably claim another month's immunity from the death for which they were reared. Everywhere one sees Nature's children preparing for the winter. Countless plants have buried themselves in the ground, their bulbs compact with stores for

A sad month at times is November, and dreary, without one special flower of its own, but brightened by the waifs and strays of October and the last splendid phase of leaf colour. Fog and mist attend the obsequies of autumn, and in lowlands, through which rivers pass, the year's third season dies in darkness. At no time of the year does spring seem quite so far away.

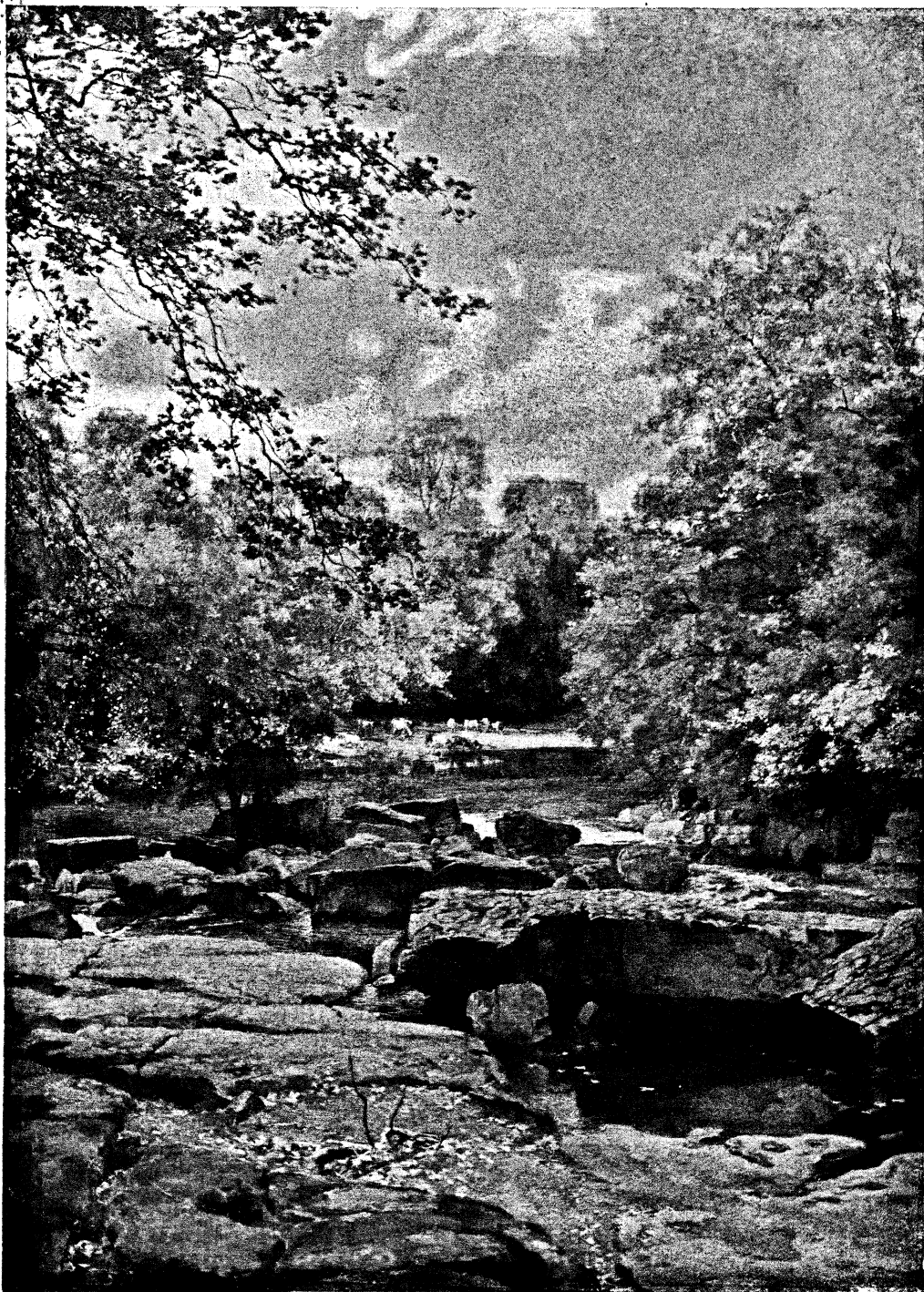
"Earth watches while her little children die" when December visits us, but the season is sad only for those of us who cannot forget the summer, who cannot forgive the ruin of woodland and garden ways.



"SUNSET AFTER RAIN." BY B. W. LEADER, R.A.

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"AUTUMN ON THE GRETA, AT THE JUNCTION OF THAT RIVER AND THE TEES, NEAR  
ROKEBY." BY ALFRED PARSONS, A.R.A.

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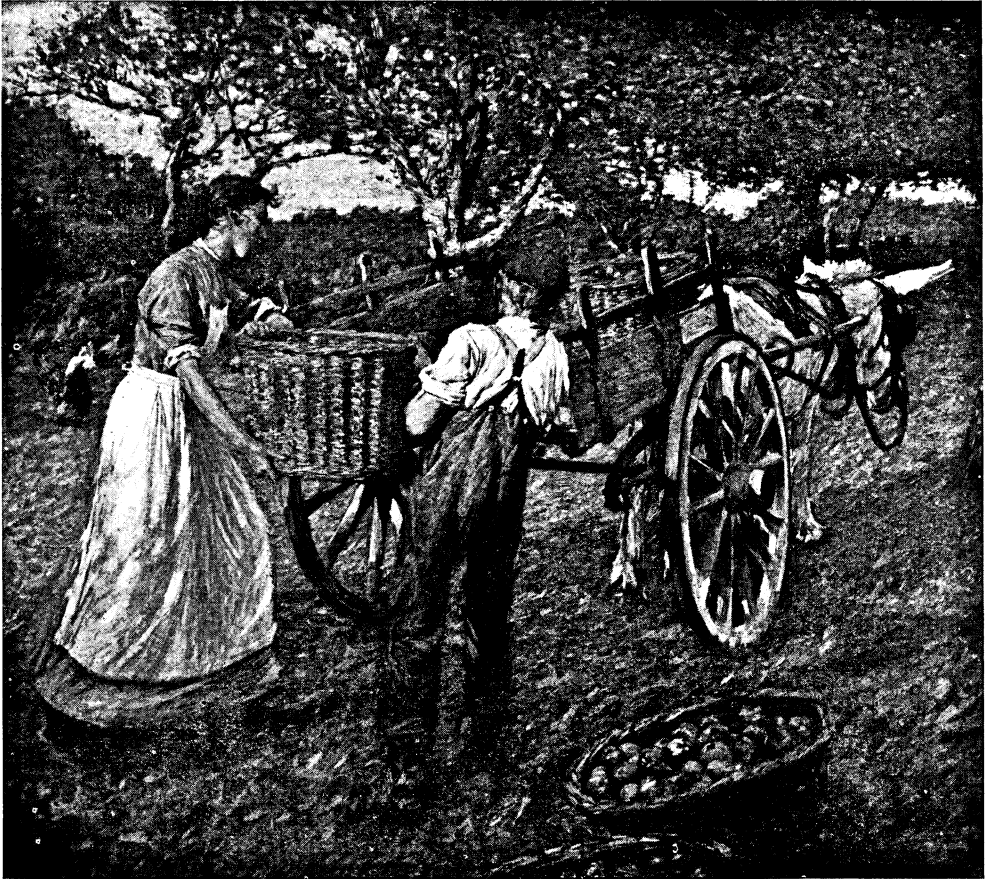
From the thicket of thorns where the nightingale calls  
not.  
Could she call, there were never a rose to reply.

But this is a time for patience and a certain quiet enjoyment for those from whom the beauty of the landscape under the snow, the fall of the rain and the triumphant song of the wind are not withheld. Then, too, there are still a few flowers in secluded corners, still a few notes from the "bare

demands, even while we appreciate the stern beauties of the season and look forward hopefully to the time when days will lengthen and the first green buds will serve to remind us that the pageant of another year is advancing upon the land.

For this is the keynote of winter, the season has a message of hope that only a dull ear can miss—

If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?



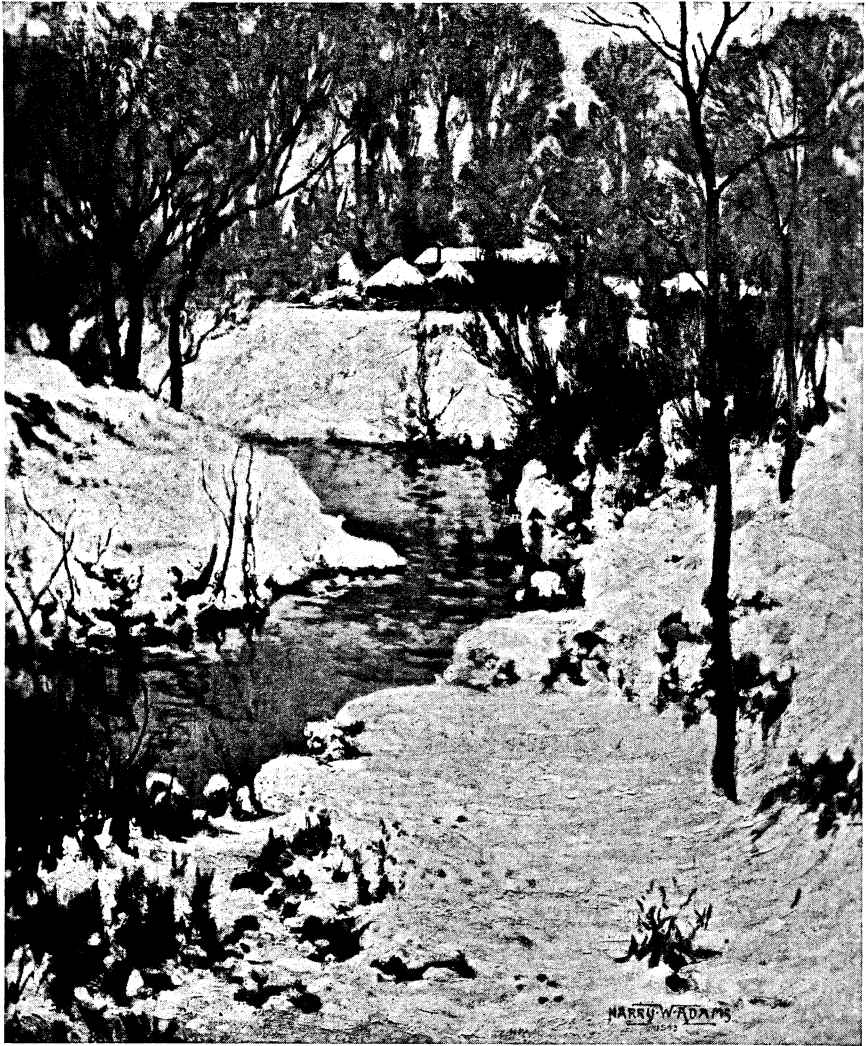
"A SUSSEX ORCHARD." BY H. H. LA THANGUE, A.R.A.

*Reproduced by permission of the Artist.*

ruined choirs where once the sweet birds sang." Just as the season invites us to help our fellow-men, so it invites us to help the helpless creatures that have made the year memorable. When we feed the bees in their hives and throw down crumbs for sparrows and starlings, or hang up to some overhanging branch small lumps of suet, in order to satisfy the hungry titmice, we are lightening countless little burdens. We are helping to diminish the tale of sacrifice that December

In this pregnant line Shelley summed up the thought that lies dormant or quickened in every heart, a thought to which countless poets have given utterance. Keats' lines come irresistibly to memory when the land lies under the spell of the season that few have learned to love—

In a drear-nighted December  
Too happy, happy Tree,  
Thy branches ne'er remember  
Their green felicity.



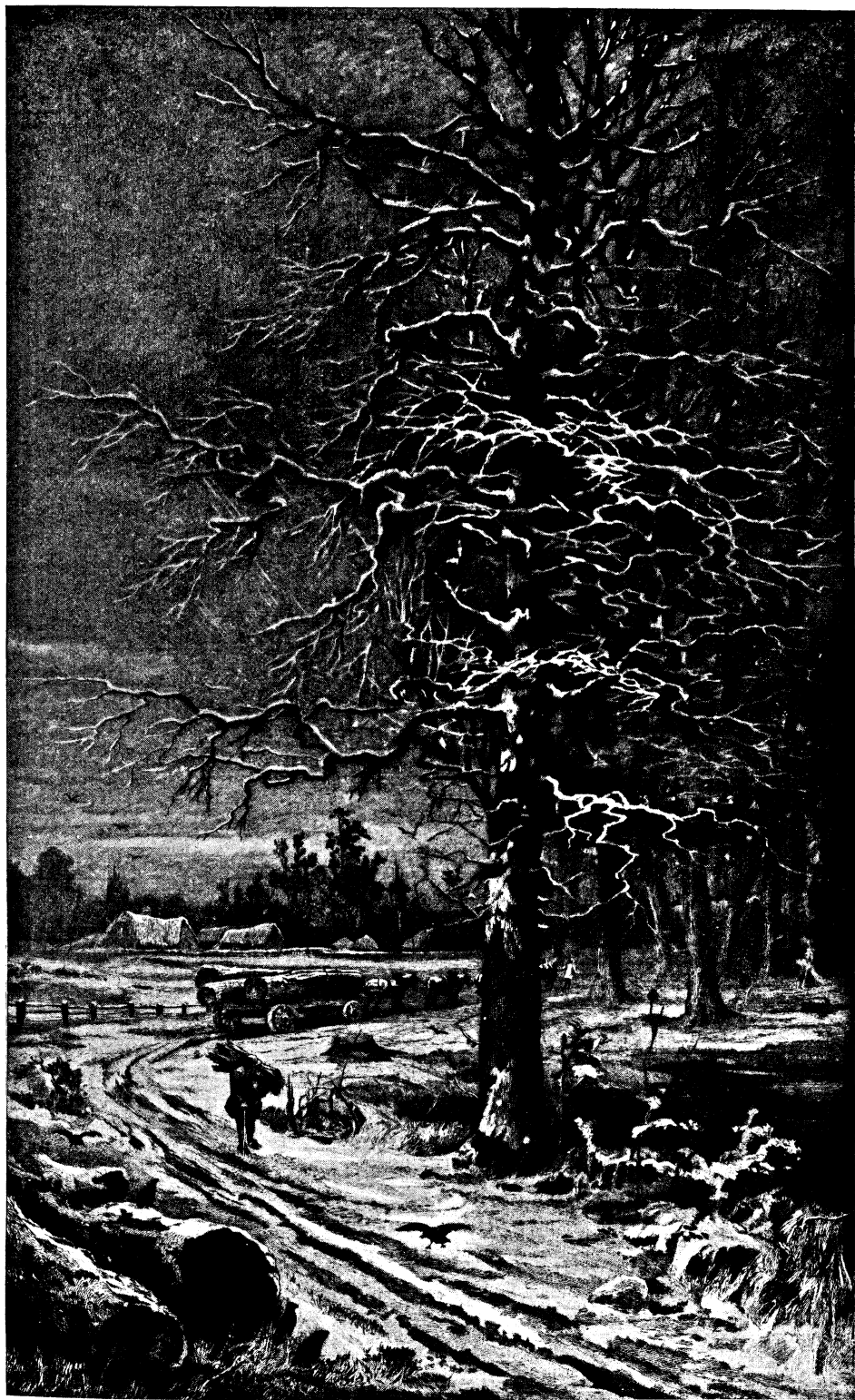
"WINTER SUNSHINE." BY HARRY W. ADAMS.

*Reproduced by permission of the Artist.*

The north cannot undo them  
 With a sleety whistle through them,  
 Nor frozen thawings glue them  
 From budding at the prime.

We could not appreciate the fresh promise of the spring or the radiance of summer if we were not called upon bravely to endure the woes that winter wears. And there is always the saving grace of Christmas, the season of goodwill, when we help to bear the burden of others and in so doing lighten our own. Christmas is happily set in mid-winter ; it lightens the weeks that precede and the weeks that follow, renews and strengthens friendships, unites all classes, develops charity,

minimises distress, turns thoughts from self, and witnesses the union of those who love in the service of those who suffer. If only for the sake of the Festive Season winter would be welcome. Indeed, to very many of us the last of the four seasons is associated with the brightest hopes, the happiest reunions, and the most fragrant memories. What matter, then, if wind and snow, frost and rain, are busy renewing the strength of Mother Earth and pursuing their appointed task in their appointed way ? It is for us to accept and not to criticise Nature's ways, and to rest content with the thought that they are ruled in wisdom and for the ultimate good of all mankind.



"WINTER." BY CHARLES F. ALLBON.

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“Uncle Soper told them how their husbands had just set sail.”

# HALF-MAST.

BY EDEN PHILLPOTTS.



AND if you think 'twas a proper or a manly or an honest thing to go gallivanting to a fair without your wife, then I'll tell you it wasn't; and if you be going to enjoy whole days of your life away from me, I'll soon make the village ring with it, and let them as fancy you're a proper husband know what you really are!"

Mercy Tuckett proceeded in this withering strain for half an hour, and her husband sat and listened with every outward sign of contrition and regret. Once, while she paused to take breath, a faint murmur was heard through the party wall of the Tuckett home, and the man smiled.

"I should much like to know what you're grinning at!" cried his wife. "At your own wicked thoughts, no doubt. However, there's a time coming, Frederick, when you'll grin on the wrong side of your face, if I'm anybody!"

"'Twasn't that," he answered; "but if you'll shut your mouth a minute, you'll hear Mrs. Leaman next door dressing down Jack, just the same as you be dressing down me. Him and me often compare notes after a breeze ashore, and 'tis just a toss of a ha'penny whether you or Jane Leaman have the sharpest tongue."

"Is it? And who sharpened 'em? He's so bad as you; and if you shouldn't hear the ugly truth in your homes, where should you hear it? You work together in the boat and conspire wickedness against your wives, and only us and Heaven knows what you both are, for you hoodwink everybody else, and the people think you're a pair of pattern husbands, and little guess what 'tis behind the scenes."

"That's true," said the man, warming up, "because Jack and me be a lot too proud to tell 'em; but if 'twas known what a time we have——"

He stopped and cooled down again.

"But there, I ban't going to quarrel.

Jack and me made a mistake, and we be sorry for it, so enough said."

"Not at all! You shan't pass it off with sorrow. I know too well what your sorrow is worth. Lasts till you be out of sight of your home, and no longer."

"'Tis the best I can do, Mercy. After all, what was the crime? We ran the boat into Torbay because the wind skewed and we couldn't get back to Daleham. And we sold the fish and went ashore and found that Brixham Fair was going on, so we had a bit of a spree. Who wouldn't? You didn't expect us to telegraph for you and Jane? And I brought you home a fairing, and Jack fetched home two cocoanuts for his wife, and what more you expected——?"

"I expected you to remember what you said when you married me," answered Mercy, and she expatiated shrilly on this text until Mr. Tuckett rose, lost his temper, and prepared to depart.

"You'll drive me mad with your trash! I thought I'd married a sane woman, not a ninny-hammer. Talk—talk—talk—and all tomfoolery at that! Look round—look round, woman, and listen to a few other men's wives, and hear a bit about what men are—not what you think they should be. Who be you, that have been wedded a bare year, to lay down the whole law and the prophets about husbands? You're a fool—a noisy, clacking, narrow-minded fool, and you don't know your luck. And I'll tell you this: I'm sick of it—sick and tired of it. I've a good mind to sail to-night and drop over the side after dark, and get the peace under the sea I can't get ashore—like poor Luke Sweet did last month. Then you'll begin to understand what life means, and see if 'tis better to be a widow than a wife."

The "fairing" that he had brought her stood on the table, and he picked it up, flung it on the floor and stamped his foot on it. The gift—a large box of chocolate creams—thus treated left some work for his wife.

"Where are you going?" she cried, as he took his hat from the table. "You haven't been in the house an hour."

"No; and that was an hour too long. I



don't know where I'm going, and don't care, so 'tis out of reach of your tongue."

He left his home and descended to the quay. Daleham clung like a swallow's nest above her little haven, and below her winding ways the fleet of boats rocked together. It was Saturday, and most of them had returned for the week-end. Some lay at the quay-side; some rode at anchor without the harbour; a few were homeward bound, their tan sails still reduced to grey by distance.

Fred Tuckett and his partner, John Leaman, shared a small trawler, and were held among the most fortunate and respectable young men in Daleham. Each had married within the year; each had saved money and prospered at his business; each had won three figures with his wife. But certain little errors of perspective on the side of Mercy and Jane promised to bring all to ruin. The women were school friends and saw alike. Their youth, hot temper, and general inexperience of the male animal was breeding trouble. The case could have been described as an ironic drama, the sequel of which none had the power to foretell. Life might broaden and preserve its comedy; on the other hand, tragedy was not impossible without a little more feminine patience and understanding to sweeten the play.

Fred and Jack possessed splendid wives; Mercy and Jane were unusually blessed in their husbands; yet none of the four was happy or content. It remained to be seen what dish was brewing for them—whether sympathy and increased experience would blow this tribulation into air, or whether their lives were destined to run awry, deflected by the cruel stupidity of ignorance.

They lived side by side, and the wives were the best of friends; but they lacked power to help each other, since they looked at life from exactly the same standpoint, and were invariably moved by the same emotions.

Now, as Frederick Tuckett passed his mate's door, the woe-begone countenance of Jack Leaman met his gaze, framed between a red geranium and a red cactus in the parlour window. His features, too, were red, but while the flowers looked cheerful, Jack's face, with its fiery cheeks and tawny, fan-shaped beard, lacked either hope or cheer.

Mr. Tuckett, who was skipper, and from force of character took the lead, signalled to Jack; whereupon his companion gladly emerged and joined him. The red man spoke.

"I heard yours going it when mine stopped to fetch her breath," he said.

"Yes; and I heard yours. It can't last much longer. I'm losing my self-respect, Jack, and I lost my temper afore I left her."

"I should have done the same if I'd got one. 'Tis us that be to blame, Frederick. Us didn't ought to have married Ilfracombe women. No good comes from the north."

Mr. Leaman was superstitious.

"I lost my temper," repeated Fred. "I said that some fine night I'd go to sea and make a hole in the water. And then I left her."

"Funny you should have spoke that! I didn't lose my temper—having none to lose. But, in a lull, I up and said: 'Look here, Jane, enough be so good as a feast—and enough I've had. There's your cocoanuts from the fair, and here be I, and neither mortal man nor boat can stand more than the weather they're built to stand. Your voice gets on my nerves like a dog barking in the night,' I said to my wife, 'and if there's much more of it,' I said, 'I won't be accountable for my actions.' 'Twas strong, no doubt, but she called me the disgrace of Daleham and a blot on English manhood—me that never looked at a female before or since I looked at her!"

"'Tis all wrong, and they'll live to find it out; and the sooner the better for our peace of mind," declared Fred. "And now I'm going to larn mine a sharp lesson, and I guess you'll do the like. We haven't been off the sea an hour, and I be going straight to sea again this minute. So come on."

"What about Ted Soper?"

"Ted can stop ashore. We'll go without him. 'Tis just to larn 'em a lesson, I tell you."

"Anything as will do that I'm agreeable to," assented the other.

"Why, my mother-in-law's an angel of sense compared to my wife," burst out Tuckett as they reached the quay. "Mrs. Priestley's got more patience in her finger than Mercy have in her whole head."

"Same with my wife's mother; 'tis the force of age and experience in 'em. Come childer——"

"You can't say that. Your wife's got one."

"One's no use, by all accounts. One makes 'em conceited and full of airs and graces. But when they run into double figures, then the gilt's off the gingerbread and they begin to understand what life means."

"Talking of gingerbread, I was that savage that I flinged Mercy's fairing on the floor and set my heel in it. A proper mess, I warn 'e! And then I got up and marched out."



“ ‘Jimmery ! She’ve got her flag half-masted, gran’faither !’ ”

"The cocoanuts wasn't a success, neither," confessed Mr. Leaman. "Jane asked me whether I thought she was a squirrel, to eat such trash, and I forgot myself for the minute and said I wished she was, because then I should know what to do with her."

They walked down the quay together and met an old man called Tom Soper. He was bent and withered and very thin. His voice croaked and his matter was generally of the mournfullest. Cheerful news did not interest him; indeed, a lifetime of experience had taught him that it interested nobody.

"Naught on earth be less to human nature in general than other people's good luck," Mr. Soper once declared in a full bar, and not a man denied it.

He expressed surprise, interest and anger to learn that Fred and Jack were going to sea on Saturday night.

"And the Lord's day to-morrow! 'Tis men like you bring the hand of Heaven against Daleham and ruin the fishery. And when I think of the burning light by night and the pillar of cloud by day that your father was, Frederick, I'm very much surprised and shocked. And as for my grandchild, Ted Soper, I shan't suffer him to go along in your boat no more if 'tis to be Sunday fishing."

"The case is peculiar," explained Fred; "and I ban't going to tell you nothing about it, Uncle Soper, because you'd croak a lot of nonsense from one end of Daleham to t'other in half an hour if I did. But we've a good reason for going to sea, and we don't want Ted; and very like we shan't drop the trawl afore Monday, if then. 'Tis private business, and there's an end of it."

"If you be going smuggling to France?"

Frederick Tuckett laughed.

"That's the idea—that'll do capital, uncle! You tell the people that me and Jack have gone to France and be going to bring over a brave boat-load of lace and brandy and cigars!"

"And what will your wives say?" asked Mr. Soper.

"Can't tell you, as we shan't be there to know," answered Fred.

In an hour the men went to sea, and their "dandy"-rigged vessel, *The Provider*, stole away between the harbour-heads.

She flashed back the red light of evening from her russet sails and soon vanished into the gathering gloom of the east.

Uncle Soper meanwhile hastened up the hill and presently marked the neighbour wives together at their cottage doors.

Mercy talked and Jane nursed a red-haired baby.

Uncle Soper told them how their husbands had just set sail.

"'Tis all wrong, and won't come to no good," he declared. "And you women ought to have more power over 'em. Such greed will surely over-reach itself and land 'em in trouble."

"Gone to sea!" exclaimed Jane. "Never!"

It happened, however, that *The Provider* was now plainly visible. Both women tried to hide their concern, but they failed.

"We had some words," confessed Mrs. Leaman. "Jack went to Brixham Fair and played about with—goodness knows who, and I was angry for certain. And who wouldn't be?"

Uncle Soper went off, and Jane and Mercy looked at one another and at the vanishing boat.

Rosy light dreamed over the Channel, and only a thin trail of smoke from a steamer shared the sea with the fisher.

They regarded each other, and each put a silent question and neither answered.

"'Tis just to trouble us and for no other reason," declared Mercy. "But I won't be troubled, and don't you be, Jane."

"Jack said that he'd so soon go into the water as not, afore he went out."

"Silly creature! And my Fred talked just the same nonsense. 'Tis to frighten us, and a very feeble sort of foolishness at that. But don't you be frightened, and don't you fret. They'll be back with their tails between their legs come morning. 'Tis now or never with 'em, and my Aunt Susan says that a man learns more in the first year of his married life than ever afore or after; so you and me will both go on teaching 'em sense and reason while 'tis the accepted time for it."

But Jane was doubtful. She watched the trawler with eyes that began to grow dim, and presently went into her home, that Mercy might not see her tears.

Left alone, the childless woman also drooped. She retraced the last scene; her heart softened a little, and she grew sad before twilight came.

She had got Fred his favourite Sunday dinner.

In the next home Jane was hugging her baby and crying about one thing while she pretended to herself that she was crying about another.

## II.

SUNDAY came; *The Provider* did not. Friends, with good intention in some cases

and mixed motives in others, called to console the young wives ; but they could ill bear comments on the situation, and chose rather to be alone together. They were crestfallen and sad ; it seemed that a storm cloud, as yet under the horizons of the sea, already threw forward some intangible and terrific shadow over them.

On Monday night it was blowing hard, and their young eyes ached with long scanning of the waves. They slept together to hearten each other.

Not till Tuesday did the full measure of their trouble come, and then a man well used to the work brought it.

Among Uncle Soper's virtues was early rising, and at dawn on Tuesday he stood at the quay-head watching the fleet put forth on the tide. Thus, though his aged sight could not enjoy the spectacle and promise of woe, his ears were the first to hear of it, and his venerable legs were swift to carry the tidings where it must be least welcome.

Young Ted Soper, much perturbed by the absence of *The Provider* and his own enforced idleness, now scanned the sea impatiently, and presently saw returning the little vessel whereon he usually worked as third hand. She approached and loomed large through the morning haze. There had blown half a gale of wind from the west since Monday morn, but to-day the sky was clear and the sea all decked in silver of dawn, rolled smooth, with nothing but a ground swell to mark the vanished storm.

Then Ted made a discovery.

"Jimmery ! She've got her flag half-masted, gran'faither !"

The ancient woke into frenzied activity on the instant.

"Half-mast ! Half-mast ! That means death or at the least some terrible misfortune. Be sure you're seeing straight, afore I carry the news like a flame of fire !"

Others corroborated Ted, and there remained no doubt that *The Provider* was bringing back trouble. She crawled in very slowly on the lazy dawn wind, and Uncle Soper declared that to his eye she had a hang-dog look, as though ashamed to return to port.

"Mark me !" he said. "She was caught in that heavy weather, and only them two aboard, and they've carried away something, and one of 'em's been drowned ! Poor women ! Poor women ! I'll get up over the hill this instant moment !"

"Bide here !" shouted a fisherman. "What's the sense of putting 'em both in a tear till

we know which 'tis ? At worst 'tis only one of 'em have got to suffer."

But Uncle would not stay.

"'Tis better as they should both be prepared. I'm an old man, and I know wiser than you young ones," he piped back.

Jane and Mercy were at their doors, and each displayed some emotion. They had seen *The Provider*, but knew not that her little flag flew at half-mast.

"Here's our boat coming home at last, Uncle Soper," said Jane.

"Too well I know it, my poor dears—too well I know it !" he gasped. "Let me catch my wind, as I've lost fighting the hill to break the awful news. Her flag's flying at half-mast ! She's bringing death—death or destruction of some sort. You mustn't hope—there's no call to hope. You must face it, as better than you and poorer than you have had to do. In a word, one of 'em—Fred or Jack—Heaven only knows which—is a goner. They would go to sea short-handed. But you——"

He found himself alone. Mercy Tuckett was already running down the hill, and Jane, staying to dart indoors and shut the door on her sleeping child, followed.

Uncle felt regretful that he had made such speed, but set off after them again as quickly as possible. He hoped to be back on the quay before *The Provider's* boat came ashore.

The old man was just in time. *The Provider's* dinghy had arrived, and she brought the dust of a dead man with her and two living ones.

Two wives sobbed on two men's bosoms while they told how the cod of *The Provider's* trawl had caught and brought back to light a corpse.

"'Tis poor Luke Sweet—him as slipped over the side of *The Good Hope* a month ago," explained Mr. Tuckett. "Us knowed him by his boots."

"He'd far better have bided at the bottom of the sea," declared Uncle Soper. "For Christian burial's out of the question now. 'Tis well known he took his own life, because Annie Westerbrook hadn't got no use for him ; and 'twill be a very indecent act and a premium on sin if parson puts him under with 'sure and certain.'"

But Uncle only spoke thus because he was secretly annoyed that not a soul in Daleham could by any possibility be the sadder concerning this matter of the friendless Luke Sweet.

And Jack and Jane and Fred and Mercy went home close, close together.

# ON THE ROOF OF THE WORLD.

By CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS.



**I**T seemed to be the very roof of the world, all naked to the outer cold, this flat vast of solitude, dimly outspread beneath the Arctic night. A line of little hills, mere knobs and hummocks, insignificant under the bitter starlight, served to emphasise the immeasurable and shelterless flatness of the surrounding expanse. Somewhere beneath the unfeatured levels the sea ended and the land began, but over all lay the monotony of ridged ice and icy, wind-scoured snow. The wind, which for weeks without a pause had torn screaming across the nakedness, had now dropped into calm; and with the calm there seemed to come in the unspeakable cold of space.

Suddenly a sharp noise, beginning in the dimness far to the left of the Little Hills, ran snapping past them and died off abruptly in the distance to the right. It was the ice, thickened under that terrific cold, breaking in order to readjust itself to the new pressure. There was a moment of strange muttering and grinding. Then, again, the stillness.

Yet, even here on the roof of the world, which seemed as if all the winds of eternity had swept it bare, there was life, life that clutched and clung savagely. Away to the right of the Little Hills, something moved, prowling slowly among the long ridges of the ice. It was a gaunt, white, slouching, startling shape, some seven or eight feet in length, and nearly four in height, with heavy shoulders, and a narrow, flat-browed head that hung low and swayed menacingly from side to side as it went. Had the light been anything more than the wide glimmer of stars, it would have shown that this lonely, prowling shape of white had a black-tipped muzzle, black edges to the long slit of its jaws, and little, cruel eyes with lids outlined in black. From time to time the prowler raised his head, sniffed with dilating nostrils, and questioned with strained ears the deathly silence. It was a polar bear, an old male,

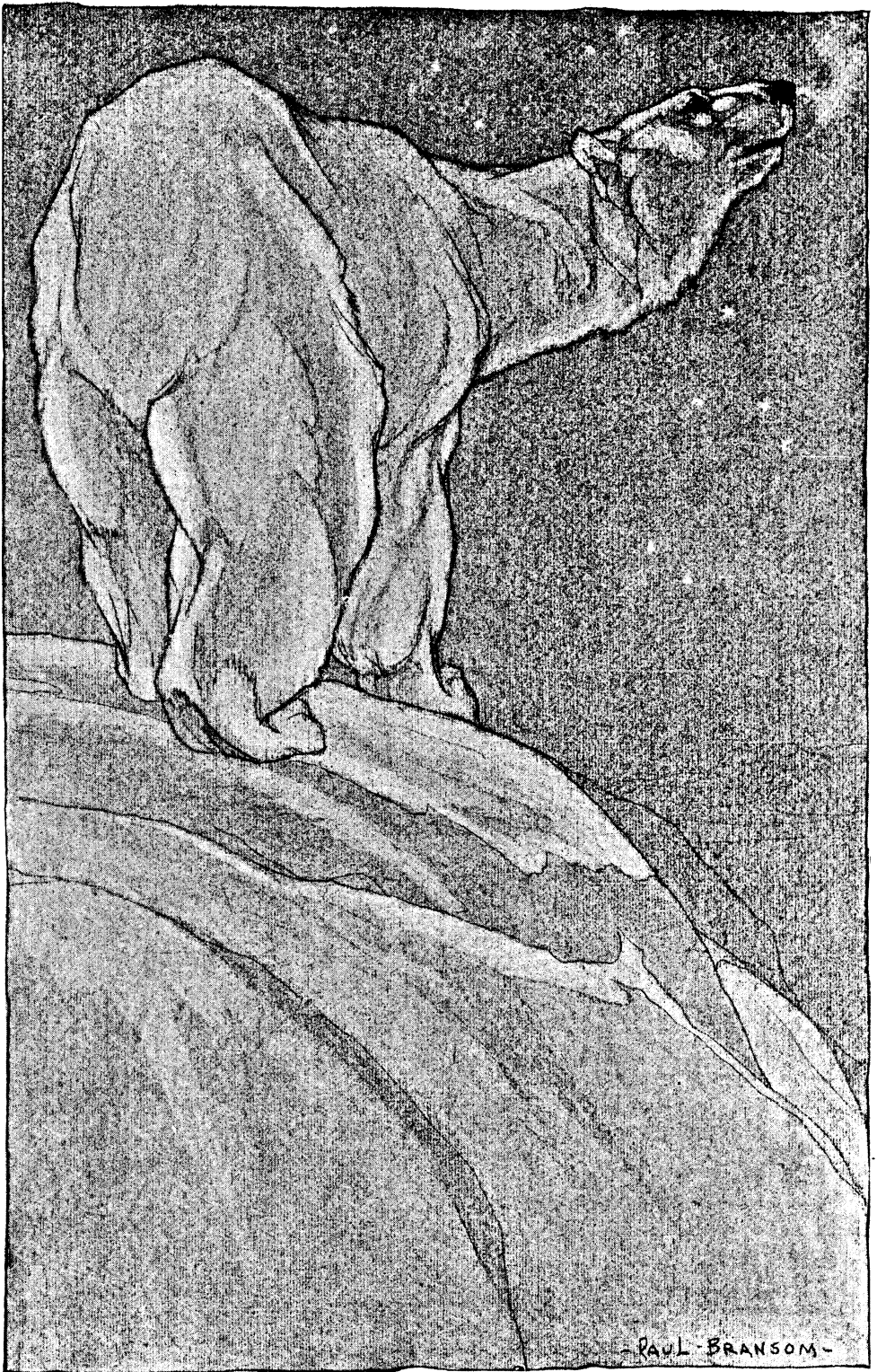
too restless and morose to content himself with sleeping away the terrible polar winter in a snow-blanketed hole.

From somewhere far off to seaward came across the stillness a light sound, the breaking of thin ice, the tinkle of splashings frozen as they fell. The great white bear understood that sound. He had been waiting for it. The seals were breaking their way up into their air-holes to breathe—those curious holes which form here and there in the ice-fields over moving water, as if the ocean itself had need of keeping in touch with upper air for its immeasurable breathing. At a great pace, but noiselessly as a drifting wraith of snow, the bear went towards the sound. Then suddenly he dropped flat and seemed to vanish. In reality he was crawling, crawling steadily towards the place of the air-holes. But so smooth was his movement, so furtive, and so fitted to every irregularity of the icy surface, that if the eye once lost him it might strive in vain to pick him up again.

Nearer, nearer he crept, till at last, lying motionless with his lean muzzle just over the crest of the ice-ridge, he could make out the dark shapes of the seals, vague as shadows, emerging for a few moments to sprawl upon the edge of the ice. Every few seconds one would slip into the water again, while another would awkwardly scramble forth. In that phenomenal cold it was necessary for them to take heed to the air-holes, lest these should get sealed up and leave them to drown helplessly under the leagues of solid ice-field. These breathing-spells in the upper air, out here on the world's roof, were their moments of greatest peril. Close to the edge of the hole they sprawled; and always one or another kept anxious watch, scanning with mild, bright eyes the menacing solitude, wherein they seemed the only things alive.

About this time, from one of a group of tiny, snow-covered mounds huddled along the base of the Little Hills, emerged a man. He crawled forth on all fours from the tunnel of his doorway, and stood up and peered about him. His squat figure was clothed and hooded in furs. His little, twinkling eyes, after clearing themselves





"From time to time the prowler raised his head . . . and questioned with strained ears the deathly silence."



from the smoke and smart of the thick air within the igloo, could see further through the gloom than even the eyes of the bear. He noted the fall of the wind, the savage intensity of the cold, and his eyes brightened with hope. He had no fear of the cold, but he feared the hunger which was threatening the lonely village. During the long rage of the wind, the supply of food in his igloo had run low. He welcomed a cold which would close up most of the seals' breathing-holes, and force more numerous visitors to the few holes that they could keep open. For some moments he stood motionless, peering and listening as the bear had done. Suddenly he, too, caught that far-off light crashing of brittle ice. On the instant he turned and crawled hastily back into the hut.

A moment later he reappeared, carrying two weapons, besides the long knife stuck in his girdle. One of these was an old Hudson Bay Company's musket. The other was a spear of spliced bone, with a steel head securely lashed to it. Powder and ball for the musket were much too precious to be expended, except in some emergency wherein the spear might fail. Without waiting for a repetition of the sounds, he started off at once unerringly in the direction whence they had come. He knew that air-hole; he could find it in the delusive gloom without the aid of landmark. For some way he went erect and in haste, though as soundlessly as the bear. Then, throwing himself flat, he followed exactly the bear's tactics, till, at last, peering cautiously over a jagged ice-ridge, he, too, could make out the quarry watchfully coming and going about the brink of the air-hole.

From this point onward the man's movements were so slow as to be almost imperceptible. But for his thick covering of furs, his skin tough as leather and reeking with oil, he would have been frozen in the midst of his journey. But the still excitement of the hunt was pumping the blood hotly through his veins. He was now within gunshot, but in that dim light his shooting would be uncertain. He preferred to worm his way nearer, and then trust to his more accustomed weapon, the spear, which he could drive half-way through the tough bulk of a walrus.

At last there remained between him and the seals but one low ridge and then a space of level floe. This was the critical point. If he could writhe his body over the crest and down the other side, he would be within

safe spear-shot. He would spring to his feet and throw before the nimblest seal could gain the water. He lay absolutely still, summoning wits, nerves, and muscles alike to serve his will with their best. His eyes burned deep in his head, like smouldering coals.

Just at this moment a ghostly light waved broadly across the solitude. It paled, withdrew, wavered back and forth as shaken from a curtain in the heavens, then steadied ephemerally into an arch of glowing silver, which threw the light of a dozen moons. There were three seals out upon the ice at that moment, and they all lifted their eyes simultaneously to greet the illumination. The man irresistibly looked up; but in the same instant, remembering the hunger in the igloo, he cowered back again out of sight, trembling lest some of the seals might have caught a glimpse of his head above the ridge. Some dozen rods away, at the other side of the air-hole, the great white bear also raised his eyes towards that mysterious light, troubled at heart because he knew it was going to hamper his hunting.

For perhaps two minutes the seals were motionless, profiting by the sudden brightness to scrutinise the expanse of ice and snow in every direction. Then, quite satisfied that no danger was near, they resumed their sportive plungings while the instantly frozen waters crackled crisply about them. For all their vigilance, they had failed to detect, on the one side, a narrow, black-tipped muzzle, lying flat in a cleft of the ice-ridge, or, on the other side, a bunch of greyish fur, nearly the colour of the greyish-mottled ice, which covered the head of the man from the igloo beside the Little Hills.

And now, while neither the man nor the bear, each utterly unconscious of the other, dared to stir, in a flash the still silver radiance of the aurora broke up and flamed into a riot of dancing colour. Parallel rays like the pipes of a Titanic organ, reaching almost from the horizon to the zenith, hurtled madly from side to side, now clongating, now shortening abruptly, now seeming to clash against one another, but always in an ordered madness of right lines. Unearthly green, palpitating into rose, and thinnest sapphire, and flame-colour, and ineffably tender violet, the dance of these cohorts of the magnetic rays went on, across the stupendous arc of sky, till the man, afraid of freezing in his unnatural stillness, shrank back down the ridge, and began

twisting his body, noiselessly but violently, to set his blood in motion ; and the bear, trusting to the confusion of shifting lights, slipped himself over the ridge and into a convenient crevice. Under the full but bewildering glare of that celestial illumination, he had gained a good ten feet upon his human rival. The man's eyes reappeared just then at the crest of his ridge. Their piercing glance lingered, as if with suspicion, upon the crevice wherein the bear had flattened himself. Was there something unduly solid in that purple shadow in the crevice? No, a trick of the witch lights, surely. The piercing eyes returned to their eager watching of the seals.

Precious as was his ammunition, and indifferent as was his shooting with the old, big bore, Hudson Bay musket, the man was beginning to think he would have to stake his chances on the gun. But, suddenly, as if at a handsweep of the Infinite, the great lights vanished.

For a few seconds, by the violence of the contrast, it seemed as if thick darkness had fallen upon the world.

In those few seconds, noiseless and swift as a panther, the man had run over the ridge to within a dozen paces of the seals, and paused with spear uplifted, waiting till his eyes should once more be able to see in the starlight glimmer. As he stood thus waiting, every sense, nerve, and muscle on the last strain of expectancy and readiness, he heard, or seemed to feel as much as to hear, the rush of some great bulk through the gloom. Then came a scramble, a heavy splash, a second splash, a terrible scuffling noise, and a hoarse, barking scream. The man remembered that before the light went out there had been three seals on the ice. Two he had heard escape. What had befallen the third? Fiercely, like a beast being robbed of its prey, he sprang forward a couple of paces. Then he stopped, for he could not yet see clearly enough to distinguish what was before him. His blood pounded through his veins. The cold of Eternity was flowing in upon him, here on

the naked roof of the world, but he had no feeling or fear of it. All he felt was the presence of his foe, there before him, close before him, in the dark.

Then, once more, the light flooded back,—the wide-flung silver radiance, as suddenly and mysteriously as it had vanished.

Close beside the air-hole, half crouching upon the body of the slain seal, with one great paw uplifted, and bloody jaws open in defiance, stood the bear, glaring at the man.

Without an instant's hesitation the man hurled his spear. It flew true. But in that same second the bear lifted his paw to ward off the blow. He was not quite quick enough, but almost. The blade struck, but not where it was aimed. It bit deep, but not to the life. With a growl of rage, the bear tore it loose and charged upon the man.

The antagonists were not more than twenty paces apart, and now a glory of coloured lights, green, red, and golden, went dancing madly over them, with a whispering, rustling sound as of stiff silk crumpled in vast folds. The man's eyes were keen and steady. In a flash both hands were out of his great fur mittens, which were tied by thongs to his sleeves. The heavy musket leapt to his shoulder, and his eye ran coolly along the barrel. There was a thunderous roar, as of a little cannon. A dense cloud of smoke sprang into the air just before the muzzle of the gun.

Through the smoke a towering shape, with wide jaws and battering paws, hurled itself. The man leaped to one side, but not quite far enough. One great paw, striking blindly, smote him down ; and, as he fell, the huge bulk fell half upon him, only to roll over the next instant and lie huddled and motionless upon the ice.

The man picked himself up, shook himself ; and a look of half-dazed triumph went across his swarthy face as he pulled on his mittens. Then he smiled broadly, patted approvingly the old Hudson Bay musket, turned on his heels, and sent a long, summoning cry across the ice towards the igloos at the foot of the Little Hills.



# LIFE.

By KATHERINE CECIL THURSTON,

*Author of "John Chilcote, M.P.," "The Gambler," "The Fly on the Wheel," etc.*



CARLINGFORD'S first sensing of the scene was impressionist. Walking down the long road that led to the gates of his own house, dreaming as he went, it struck home to him with that vague charm

that at once intrigues and attracts. It had a foreign, even a nomadic suggestion that appealed to his over-fine appreciation of the romantic; and, narrowing his gaze, he studied the picture with the deliberate enjoyment of the amateur.

Grey was the dominant note—the soft, sad grey of the Irish evening sky, the thick grey dust of the winding roadway, the grey-coated donkeys standing patient and forlorn beside the butts from which the tinkers had descended.

Grey was the dominant note, but deeper tones—sombre greens and shadowy browns—were offered by Carlingford's demesne wall, while in the foreground of the picture a splash of copper-red marked where the wanderers had kindled a fire.

A company of tinkers on their way to Rathpeale! As a man of position, as an owner of property, Carlingford was in duty bound to condemn the travelling tinker—the wastrel, the drunkard, the curious, bastard gypsy of Ireland. But Carlingford was that strange being, the possessor of a dual individuality; and the latent self—the dreaming self that rambled with him under the stars on spring nights, and sailed the seas with him on enchanted autumn mornings, ousted the man of property as he walked down the long road, and went hastening forward in the pursuit of the artistic.

The hour was eight; the month August; twilight was falling as a dew might fall. As he neared the encampment, voices reached him—voices rough and low, voices high and shrill, into each of which was woven the odd melody of the brogue, saving it from discord.

He heard but did not heed this medley of speech; impressions came to him more readily through the eye than through the ear, and it was the group of men and women, disputing over their evening meal—the silent, immovable donkeys—the fire being nursed to a glow by a gipsy-faced boy, barefooted and clad in tattered garments, that held his interest.

As he passed the fire, he paused. It had been built within a few feet of his own gate—his own wall had been deliberately chosen to give it shelter, and for a second the conventional self—the self that administered justice from the Rathpeale bench—prompted remonstrance.

"Look here!" he exclaimed severely, "you know you have no right to be obstructing the public road like this!"

The effect of the words was instant. With a start, the crouching figure knelt erect, and two dark, defiant eyes challenged him.

"An' if I am itself, what harm is it?"

The crossing of the voices carried through the twilight; a surprised hush fell upon the disputing men and women.

"What is it, at all?"

A red-haired young hussy carrying a baby came forward into the firelight, and behind her, quiet and observant, stole a little girl of eight with the corner of a dirty pinafore held shyly between her teeth.

"What is it, d'you say? Shure, it's Patsy, of coorse, at some of his thricks!" Another female voice sounded out of the dusk, and another face, sodden with drink and bearing the mark of many an affray, was thrust into the light, while an ungentle hand was laid on the shoulder of the boy. "Come, now, who have you there—that you're givin' the length of your tongue to?"

The boy turned, his dark eyes blazing. "How do I know?"

The woman peered into the gloom, her inquisitive glance discerning Carlingford, and instantly her face assumed an expression servile and frightened.

"Glory be! If it isn't his Honour, it is! An' to think that a thrawnneen like you——"

With well-feigned rage, her hand loosed the boy's shoulder and came down upon his ear in a resounding blow.

The recipient of the blow made no sound, but the men and women in the background laughed callously, and with astonishing suddenness the little girl of the pinafore broke into weeping.

The whole affair jarred Carlingford. The delicate impressionist picture had become a sordid drama, and his dominating desire was for flight; but the child's crying, so sudden, so abandoned, held him—held him to his own annoyance; and he gazed at the grief-stricken figure, his nerves vibrating unpleasantly to every sob.

"What's the matter with that child?" he asked.

"The matther wid her, indade!" cried the virago. "'Tis thim two have the heart scalded out o' me! Whisht, now!" she shouted at the child. "Don't you see the gentleman in front o' you?"

A heartrending sob was the only answer, and again Carlingford was constrained to probe the affair.

"But what's the matter with her?"

The red-haired girl with the baby gave an ironical laugh. "'Tis the way she's cryin' because Mary Cassidy gave young Patsheen a clout. Shure, a person would think that she was wan flesh an' blood wid him, the pass she puts on him!"

The words and the laugh brought a shudder to Carlingford; his mind fled for shelter to the thought of his own circumscribed, fastidious life; and, shutting his eyes to the crude passions displayed before him and his ears to the child's lamentations, he made a hasty movement towards escape.

But the virago, scenting danger, made a movement equally swift and caught him by the coat-sleeve.

"Your Honour! Your Honour! Wait a minute! 'Tisn't hard your Honour would be on the likes of us poor cratures, that do be thravellin' the roads undher the rain an' the stars? An' the feet dhroppin' off us, Heaven help us!"

"Off your unfortunate donkeys, you mean!" Carlingford was driven to irritation by the dirty, clinging hand.

"Dunkeys?" came a threatening and not too sober male voice. "I suppose 'tis carriage-horses we have a right to be tacklin' to the butts?"

"Whisht, now, Michael!" cried the woman diplomatically. "Shure, who knows betther than yourself the soft heart his Honour has

for poor people like us? Didn't he let yourself off wid a month, inside on the Rathpale binch, the time you had words with O'Rafferty? An', so signs, he won't begrudge us to be takin' a little spell o' rest under the shadda of his own grand wall!"

Disgust sharpened to loathing in Carlingford's mind. He wrenched himself free of the clinging hand, and, with a weakness he condemned, drew a handful of coins, silver and copper, from his pocket and thrust them into the rapacious fingers.

"You may remain here, as long as you keep quiet! But see that you don't visit the public-house to-night."

"The public-house! Is it the public-house?" And a torrent of denial, reproach and gratitude was borne after him on the still night air, as he thankfully escaped into the dignified shelter of his avenue.

\* \* \* \* \*

The little interlude had been unpleasant; and it was an article of faith with Carlingford to avoid the unpleasant. Years ago, when, as a bookish young man, he had been recalled from the university to fill his father's place at Carlingford, he had evolved this doctrine; and time, gliding by imperceptibly in that luxury of idleness obtainable in Ireland, had served to fix its tenets. The interlude had been unpleasant, distinctly unpleasant; and, like a phantom, the recollection of it passed with him up the avenue, even up the wide stairs of his house to the room where for fifteen years he had dressed nightly for his solitary dinner—dressed, not from the love of ceremony, but simply from the punctilious desire of the care, the cleanliness, the circumstance due to the existence of a gentleman.

At a quarter before nine he entered the library, where in summer the well-appointed dinner-table was drawn to the open French window, and in winter to the comfortably wide hearth with its fire of pine logs. Neighbours were few on the lonely sea-coast, and Carlingford had long ago withdrawn from the weariness of entertaining and being entertained. With his ample leisure and his ample means, he found life a smooth affair, propounding no questions, weaving no snares.

This negative satisfaction soothed him to-night as he passed across the soft carpet to the table by the open window, where the eight candles in the tall, old-fashioned candelabra shed a pleasant light on the linen and the silver, their flames scarcely stirred by the light breath of the August night.

Beside the table stood Mrs. Gallagher—housekeeper to his father during the last years of his life—guide, philosopher, almost friend to Carlingford himself since his succession to the property. Every night Mrs. Gallagher came thus to watch her master's dinner served, to tempt him with the most agreeable morsels, to recount—if circumstances were propitious—the gems of the day's gossip, finally to pour out with her own hand his glass of port, and to retire with the invariable formula: "Good night, Mister Anthony! I hope everything was to your satisfaction"; to which Carlingford as invariably replied: "Thank you, Mrs. Gallagher! Everything was excellent."

Neither saw the humour, neither saw the possible boredom in the reiterated phrases. Carlingford was satisfied with the cooking and the serving of his meal; Mrs. Gallagher was satisfied to cook and serve.

To-night this atmosphere of satisfaction was obviously to be felt. Carlingford, like a man physically tired, sat back in his chair while one of Mrs. Gallagher's minions placed his soup before him, and Mrs. Gallagher herself quietly poured out a glass of sherry.

Silence—the pleasant silence of the summer night—lay upon the scene; and Carlingford, gazing across the shrubbery, growing accustomed to the darkness, began to pick out the stars in their familiar stations, allowed his eyes to wander luxuriously over the dark, shaven lawn, and back to the framework of the open window, from which a spray of roses drooped, catching the candlelight with singularly beautiful effect.

This placid silence lasted throughout the meal; and it was not until Mrs. Gallagher saw the savoury placed upon the table that she ventured into speech.

"Were you in Rathpeale to-day, Mister Anthony?"

He came slowly back from his dreaming.

"I was, Mrs. Gallagher."

"And did you come round by the cliffs and you returning, or did you come up the avenue?"

"I came by the road."

"Oh!" There was much significance in Mrs. Gallagher's intonation.

Carlingford slowly ate his savoury. "I suppose you're thinking of those tinkers? You're thinking I ought to have had them turned away from the gates?"

Mrs. Gallagher bridled. "Oh, Mister Anthony, sure you read a person's thoughts before they can speak!"

"Oh, I know your prejudice against tinkers!"

"Not a prejudice, I hope, Mister Anthony!"

"Well, then, a feeling."

"Well, perhaps a feeling," she admitted. "You know," she added half credulously, half shamefacedly, "there are people that believe 'twas the tinkers made the nails that fastened our Lord to the cross."

Had Carlingford been another man, he would have smiled. But he never smiled at these, to him, rather charming superstitions. "Don't you think," he said seriously, "that the prejudice isn't really a religious one, but rather the natural resentment of the law-abiding individual against the rogue and vagabond?"

Mrs. Gallagher shook her head, as her minion removed Carlingford's plate and folded the cloth, leaving the polished mahogany table bare. "Vagabonds, indeed! There're some would say 'vagabonds' was an easy word. I'll never forget last year when this self-same lot settled themselves outside poor Rafferty's field beyond, and nearly did for the poor man on his way home from Rathpeale. Only yesterday Mrs. Rafferty was telling me she didn't sleep easy in her bed for six months after."

"Oh, Rafferty was as drunk as the tinkers!"

"Well, maybe he had a drop taken, though I know the man doesn't drink."

"Don't let's discuss it," said Carlingford hurriedly. "I'll have my port now; and get Julia to move the candles to the corner of the table. The light on that Gloire de Dijon is wonderful!"

His wishes were obeyed, and Mrs. Gallagher, with a hand steady from long practice, began slowly to fill his glass with his grandfather's mellow port.

Carlingford, leaning back in his chair, watched the operation with meditative, leisurely satisfaction. At last the veil of quietude had dropped back into its place, and he was enclosed in his agreeable world with his thoughts, his roses, his assiduous, unobtrusive servitors.

He drew a deep, contented sigh; but ere his lips had closed upon the sigh, his nerves leaped to a jarring sound, and Mrs. Gallagher, the steady-handed, gave a little cry, while the port gushed out over the polished table.

"Oh, Mister Anthony! What was that? 'Twas a woman's cry, surely!"

Carlingford, tingling to the horror of sound that had cut the still air, rose to his feet.



“‘Look here!’ he exclaimed severely, ‘you know you have no right to be obstructing the public road like this!’”



"Shut the window, Julia!" he commanded.

The young servant, excited and trembling, ran forward; but Mrs. Gallagher, glad of any outlet to her feelings, anticipated her, and the heavy window closed with a thud as another cry, more ear-piercing than the first, cleft the silence.

"Glory be to Heaven! They're killin' each other below there!" broke from Julia.

"You may go away, Julia," said Mrs. Gallagher with superiority, as she began ardently to wipe up the spilt wine. "What is it to us if a parcel of tinkers begin to fight? Sure, what are they doing, ever and always, but fighting?"

Her tone to her inferior was full of unconcern; but when Julia had disappeared, she turned upon Carlingford with a white face.

"That was an unearthly sort of a screech, Mister Anthony! There was the sound like of death in it."

But Carlingford was unnerved, and exhibited all the irritation of the unnerved man.

"Draw the curtains across the window!" he said, "and then send round to the stables and get the men to rout these people out! To rout them out, I say—lock, stock, and barrel! I'll have peace within my own walls, if I have nothing else!"

And Mrs. Gallagher, knowing her master, went without a word.

\* \* \* \* \*

For an hour Carlingford wooed his lost peace. He lighted one of his choicest cigars; he took down from the bookshelves an old and fascinating volume; but every wile proved vain. Again and yet again his jarred senses strained towards the dark, primitive horror that lurked somewhere in the night—outside his pleasant room, outside his pleasant gardens. He found his eyes straying from the open page of the book to the moveless window curtains; he found himself involuntarily laying down the volume to listen for some echo of the hideous human cry.

But no sign came; and at last the silence grew unbearable. He threw the book aside with an unwonted vehemence of action and began to pace up and down the room. For long he paced, at times fast, at times slowly; then abruptly his pacing ceased. At last a sound had broken the insufferable stillness—a sound, not without, but within the house! A sound of excited whispering, of many hurrying feet.

Events, slow to occur in Ireland, are wont to precipitate themselves when once they are given birth. The library door was thrown open without ceremony, and a demoralised Mrs. Gallagher appeared, behind her a little knot of men and women servants, each brimming with a personal and delighted sense of the excitement in the air.

"What is the meaning of this?" demanded Carlingford.

Mrs. Gallagher gasped, then spoke, giving full effect to the statement she had to make.

"'Tis murder, Mister Anthony! That's what it is! Murder, no less!"

Carlingford looked from her scared face to the row of faces behind it.

"Murder it is, sir!" The Carlingford coachman advanced, saluting respectfully.

A great revolt seized Carlingford, revolt against the horror, revolt against the gloating excitement.

"And what has it to do with me?" he demanded.

"Only that it happened at your own gates, Mister Anthony! It seems the tinkers had drink taken before they came here at all, and about an hour back the big red man that nearly killed O'Rafferty last year went into the little public-house above at the cross, and bought a couple of bottles of whisky—how he got the money no one knows!—and by a quarter past nine he was raging drunk. Leary can tell you!"

Leary, the coachman, saluted again. "'Tis thrue, sir! They were drunk at nine, an' I comin' back from Rathpale wid the black mare!"

"But what has this to do with me? What in the name of Heaven has this to do with me?" Every fibre of Carlingford's being was lacerated by the loathsome tale.

"On'y, sir, that I was barely in the stable, an' thinkin' about a feed for the mare, when——" Leary broke down, glancing at Mrs. Gallagher for assistance.

"—When he heard the woman crying out, Mister Anthony, the same as we did here, and, as quick as his legs would carry him, he ran to the big gate, and there he found the man roaring and tearing like a wild beast, with his wife by the hair of her head, and he beating her like he'd beat a donkey——"

"Stop!" said Carlingford, sick with a deep disgust. "Of course you went for the police, Leary?"

"As quick as I could run, sir—meself an' Brien from the lodge! But when we got back——" Again he quailed, again he looked at Mrs. Gallagher.

"—When they got back, Mister Anthony, the woman was stone dead, and the man still beating her, and the rest of them—all but a little girl and a young boy—had taken to their heels!"

"Well?" said Carlingford stonily.

"The police took the man in charge, Mister Anthony, and the body is moving now to Rathpeale; but the children——" It was her turn now to look for help to Leary.

"You'd pity thim two poor childhren, sir!" said Leary timidly. "Upon me word, you would! Two more forlorn creatures——"

Suspicion overcame Carlingford's disgust.

"Mrs. Gallagher," he demanded severely, "what are you trying to say? Where are these tinker children?"

Mrs. Gallagher clasped her hands in nervous trepidation. "Oh, Mister Anthony! Oh, sir, don't say I did wrong! But, I declare, the sight of them would draw blood from the heart of a stone, even if they are tinkers, itself!"

"Where are they?"

"In the kitchen, Mister Anthony! In the kitchen!"

Carlingford braced himself to meet the unpleasant. "You have done very wrong, Mrs. Gallagher. The police are the people to deal with this."

"The police? Oh, Heaven help us! And if you saw the creatures, Mister Anthony, I declare, if you saw them——" Mrs. Gallagher's kindly voice melted into tears.

Carlingford would have faced a regiment of soldiers sooner than a crying woman.

"What do you want to do?" he asked.

"Oh, only the Christian act, Mister Anthony, to shelter the homeless." A sob broke from her, and somewhere in the background an echoing sob, instantly stifled, gave evidence of the audience of maids. Carlingford's much-tried soul cried out for peace—peace at any price.

"Oh, do what you like!" he exclaimed. "Do anything you like! But remember one thing. I refuse to see the children. I utterly and entirely refuse to see them!" And with an energy he had never before displayed, he shut the library door upon Mrs. Gallagher, upon Leary, upon the group of gaping maids and men.

## II.

AGAIN it was the month of August, again Anthony Carlingford was making his way to the old stone house set in its dreaming gardens. But save for these fundamental

details, the circumstances were dissimilar. The hour was four o'clock; the way he had chosen was not the long and dusty road from Rathpeale, but the heather-covered cliff track; while, incidentally, it may be mentioned that eight years had passed since the night he had blurred his eyes, connoisseur fashion, to scan the tinker's encampment with its delicate tones of grey.

Incidentally! The word is permissible. The passage of eight years is usually a grave affair, in which months, weeks, sometimes even days, are grudgingly parted with; but in Ireland years are woven, years pass from the loom of time and are lost, like the threads of a dream. In manner of thought, in manner of speech, even in gait and personal appearance, Carlingford was the same man—the fastidious amateur, the being curiously drawn by life, curiously repelled by it. This fact of an unchanged personality was recognised to the full by the sharp young eyes of a boy of twenty as he came over the cliff track in the ripe glory of the afternoon.

The boy, with his face set towards Rathpeale, was walking fast, as those walk who would outdistance time; Carlingford, sauntering homeward, went slowly, dreaming over the things at hand—the haze of heat upon the sea, the smell of the late heather, the low, incessant hum of insect life rising about his feet. The boy's quick glance lighted upon the grey-clad figure the moment it came into view, and remained fixed upon it with set purpose. Carlingford's gaze never discerned the boy until they were at close quarters and he was aware of someone barring his path.

Reluctantly his eyes yielded up the vision of sleeping sea and shimmering haze; but his glance, once caught, was held, for his taste for the artistic was as catholic as ever, and there was something in the stranger as arresting as it was picturesque.

A tall lad of twenty, whose shirt left his neck free of the sun and wind, a lad clothed in worn trousers, a rough white flannel coat and a wide-brimmed felt hat that varying weather had coloured to the hue of rust. The sight is not uncommon in Ireland, yet Carlingford's pale, critical eyes opened and shut and opened again; for it seemed, with a stretch of the imagination, that, strolling over the lonely cliff, he had suddenly encountered the image, the personification of Youth.

The boy was light of build, but lithe as well as light, and possessed of a grace and poise that set the fancy tingling to ancient

suggestions—gods and mortals, shepherd boys and pipes. Carlingford's gaze travelled slowly over the supple, youthful figure and raised themselves to the stranger's face, where mythology was instantly banished by a swift, material consciousness that he had seen the face before; that somewhere in some inner cell of memory, the image of it was stamped with its peculiar impression of arrogance, its remarkable brilliance of eyes and teeth.

He gazed, puzzled and perplexed; and, as he gazed, the boy pulled off his rust-coloured hat in salutation, and the sun fell full upon his smooth skin, his bronze-brown hair, the fine modelling of his lips and chin.

"You don't know me, sir?"

The voice was the voice of the peasant, but the manner of speech was quick, the accompanying glance keen and direct.

"Who are you?" asked Carlingford.

The boy laughed.

"Maybe, when I tell you, you won't be very partial to me. I'm Patrick Kennedy!"

"What! The tinker boy?" The words escaped Carlingford; but his refinement instantly prompted amendment.

"You're the boy who—who——"

The young face reddened, but the arrogant soul of the lad flung his shame from him as something intolerable.

"That's it, sir! The tinker boy that was fool enough to run away from you this month eight years back!"

Carlingford shrank from the bluntness of the speech, but his mind could not refuse the picture it instantly called up—the picture of Mrs. Gallagher on the morning after the tragedy, Mrs. Gallagher affrighted and distressed, standing at his bedside with his early cup of tea, informing him that the little tinker girl was downstairs, as good as gold, but that there was neither trace nor tidings of the boy!

At the stirring of memory, he looked again at the youth, and a question that had frequently flitted across his mind in the drifting years found vent.

"Why did you do it?" he said. "What made you run away?"

The boy looked out at the dreaming sea.

"I don't rightly know, sir," he said at last. "'Twas somethin' within me. The house above was grand enough, surely, but I thought I was in a prison that night. 'Twas the way that life was callin' to me!"

"And where did you go? Back to your own people?"

"No!" The boy's eyes flashed; then he

subdued his expression and his voice and offered an explanation. "Shure, none of them was rightly my own people. Peggy and me was lone like. When Peggy's father died, her mother married a labourin' man back in the County Clare and gave up travellin' the roads altogether, and my own father and mother died when I was a baby. What call had I to go back?"

"And how did you live?"

"I tramped the roads, sir, gettin' a bit here and a sup there in return for a day's work; and then, when I got more sense, I found regular work, until now these three year I've been with a strong farmer up in the County Wicklow, earnin' good money."

"I see! I see!" Carlingford was slightly at a loss for the suitable word. "Then, I suppose, you are content?"

The eager eyes flashed back from the sea.

"Well, sir, I am and I'm not! My heart is set on one thing this long piece back."

"Indeed! And what is that?"

"I'm goin' to America, sir. I have my passage money saved."

"To America?" Carlingford's voice became didactic. "What do all you young men want going to America? You may not get as much money at home, but at least you have a quiet life. I can't understand it."

"I can't understand it myself, sir. But I suppose it's the same way it was when I ran away from here—'tis life, like, callin' to me."

They were silent for a moment, while the mystery of existence floated about them, voiced by the humming insects, mirrored in the shining sea.

"And why have you come back?" asked Carlingford at last.

The boy's eyes met his steadily, but his clear skin reddened.

"To say 'Good-bye' to Peggy, sir, and to thank you. To thank you for all you done for us both that time, and for all you done for Peggy ever since—educatin' her and treatin' her as if—as if——"

"Say no more! Please say no more!" said Carlingford stiffly. "Peggy is entirely in my housekeeper's hands, and I am assured by her that any kindness we may have shown her has been amply repaid. Peggy has proved to be a most—a most estimable child."

He spoke as he always spoke when he wanted to dismiss a subject or an individual; and Patrick Kennedy, with his young intuition, realised that his *congé* had been given him.

"Well, sir, I'm thankful to you, whatever

—for her and for myself. Good evening to you, sir !”

Carlingford was already moving away. “Good evening !” he said. “And I hope that prosperity will be yours in—in your new venture.”

“Thank you, sir !” The boy stood bare-headed in the sun—the personification of youth, of health, of promise. “Thank you ! And God bless you !”

Curious and interesting were the thoughts of Carlingford, as he pursued the uneven cliff path. By no choice of his own, he had been made conscious with an almost unpleasant vividness of the eight years that had crept from Time’s loom and been drawn into oblivion like thistledown into the wind. With a rude directness, he had been made to realise that things had happened in those mythical eight years—that Nature had been quarrying and building—that the children of yesterday were stealing a march upon the men and women of to-day.

By a justifiable sequence of ideas, his thoughts turned to Peggy—Peggy Baron, the tinker’s child—whose existence he had zealously endeavoured to ignore because of its gross associations. He recalled with a curious precision the various phases of Peggy’s sojourn under his roof—the facts conscientiously recorded by Mrs. Gallagher and irritably dismissed by himself. He remembered his hasty agreement that the child should be sent daily to the convent school in Rathpeale, his hasty sanctioning of the purchase of clothes—his bored attention to Mrs. Gallagher’s growing praise of the girl and her capabilities ; and as he walked along, absently prodding the heather with his stick, he recalled his own first meeting with Peggy—a meeting composed, upon his side, of keen embarrassment, upon hers of shyness, speechlessness, and subsequent flight.

Shyness and subsequent flight ! Now that he came to consider the matter, that had been Peggy’s unwavering attitude. Shyness and subsequent flight ! The idea vaguely displeased him. Why should Peggy fear him ? Why should she avoid him ? She was no longer a scared child ; she was approaching womanhood ; she must be sixteen years old.

At this point in his recollections he paused, attracted by a sound coming from the cliff below him, from a spot where gorse and heather melted into rock, forming delightful nooks and ledges, sheltered from the wind, played upon by every ray of sun.

He listened. It was a strange sound—

restrained and yet very pitiful—a sound that touched his memory as the boy’s brilliant face had touched it—the quiet, unmistakable sound of crying.

He listened ; then, in absolute contradiction to his nature, he began a slow and careful descent of the heathery slope.

With much precision, assisting himself by the stout stick he always carried, he went lower and still lower, until, peering over a jutting rock, he beheld the author of the sound—a girl, whose slight and childish figure was curled up in an attitude of despair.

For one moment he stood looking down, then his innate sensitiveness prompted him to declare himself.

“Peggy !” he said gently.

Ever after, he was destined to remember the result of that quiet speaking of the name. The incredibly swift uprising of the figure, the flushed, startled face, the blue-green eyes with their fringe of wet lashes : above all, the look of fear, the look of the trapped animal, that urged him to say without any choosing of words : “It’s only me, Peggy ! Surely you’re not afraid of me ?”

The words spoken, he lost the sense of the incongruous and, stepping cautiously from rock to rock, presently found himself beside her.

“Surely you’re not afraid of me ?”

Peggy only gasped. She was exquisitely, unconsciously childlike in her embarrassment.

He looked at the parted lips, the glimpse of white teeth that the sun revealed, and a strange, uncatalogued sensation touched him.

“Sit down again !” he said. “Sit down and tell me why you’re crying.”

Obediently she sank into her former place ; but at his words the rebellious tears rose up anew, trembled a second on the thick lashes, and rolled unchecked over the soft cheeks.

“What are you crying for ?”

Her only answer was to bury her face in her hands, to throw her body forward as if weighted down by grief, and to weep afresh with an exceeding bitterness.

“Tell me, Peggy !” Carlingford—the hyper-sensitive Carlingford—bent over her, noting for the first time the fineness of her ear, the delicate whiteness of her neck where the warm, reddish hair grew in little tendrils.

Persistence conquered ; Peggy’s woe found speech.

“It’s because he’s gone !”

“Who ? Kennedy ?”

“Yes !”

“But he was never here.”

"No, but he was somewhere!" sobbed Peggy illogically. "And now he's gone."

Carlingford could find no refutation of this statement, and Peggy cried on undisturbed.

For long she cried, her sobs shaking her light frame as they had shaken it on the night she had been thrust into Carlingford's life; but at last a sense of the fitness of things broke a way through her grief, and raising her face from her hands, she looked at her benefactor like one newly returned from another world.

"Oh, Mr. Carlingford, what must you think of me? What would Mrs. Gallagher think?"

Carlingford found her soft voice, her distress, her self-abasement as strange and as attractive as her smooth cheeks and childlike mouth.

"Isn't Mrs. Gallagher kind to you, then?" He put the question merely to hear her speak again.

"Oh, nobody could be kinder!"

"Yet you aren't happy?"

"It isn't that." Her head dropped.

"What is it?"

"I don't know."

"You feel lonely?"

The tears that had gathered on her lashes fell sharply, and she wiped them away with the back of her hand. "I do—sometimes." Her eyes were lifted to Carlingford's, and it struck him with a fastidious pleasure that their colour was exactly the colour of the sea.

"Why sometimes?"

"Oh, sometimes a queer feel comes over me. I can't explain it. A feel—a feel that I don't belong to this place!"

He looked at her, and the exquisite sense of a soul behind the blue-green eyes touched him poignantly—a soul struggling to find expression, striving to break a way into the light.

"Peggy," he said suddenly, "we have been starving you all these years!" He bent forward, conscious that he was perpetrating a tremendous act, and took her hand in his.

"Peggy, you need a friend."

"Oh, I do!—I do!" cried Peggy fervently; and in the fulness of her own secret misery she drew away her hand and burst into fresh crying.

### III.

THUS it was that Carlingford's fastidious soul had come into touch with reality.

With the first long look into little Peggy's eyes, Woman had ceased to be an abstraction—had been transformed into something imminent and concrete; and the solitary, the *dilettante* student of the unique and refined, had fallen into love like any common man.

Nature is nothing if not ironical; but she generally keeps the smile to herself. The old ordered precision had coloured everything when Carlingford had returned home on that fateful evening: the silver had gleamed, the candle flames had wavered lightly in the light air, even the luxurious Gloire de Dijon roses had hung down to catch the glow in precisely their ancient manner. The only change had lain in the fact that he himself had been oblivious of Mrs. Gallagher's tentative efforts at gossip, and that his gaze had wandered over the shrubby trees, finding a new and altogether different meaning in the stars that powdered the remote summer sky.

Looking at these ethereal stars, a tremulous realisation of his state had come to him—a sensation composed of delight and fear that urged him towards some expression of himself. The intoxicating desire had seized him to turn upon his astonished house-keeper and say: "I have seen the woman among women—the pearl above price! And she is Peggy—Peggy, the recipient of my charity; Peggy, the tinker's child!"

But instead, being primarily Anthony Carlingford, and only secondarily a lover, he had said nothing at all until the port was laid upon the table; and then, reddening painfully and assuming a careful indifference of tone, he had stopped Mrs. Gallagher on her way to the door.

"Mrs. Gallagher."

"Yes, Mr. Anthony."

"Mrs. Gallagher, the library is in a shocking condition. I am thinking of getting somebody down from Dublin to catalogue the books for me."

He had paused and taken a sip of port, while horror had been displayed upon Mrs. Gallagher's good-natured face.

"Gracious goodness, Mr. Anthony! 'Tisn't a stranger you're going to bring into the house?"

"Oh, temporarily—merely temporarily."

He had kept his eyes discreetly upon his glass.

"But, my gracious me! couldn't anyone make a list of them books?"

"Not anyone. It would require intelligence and some education."

In her perplexity Mrs. Gallagher had hastened in a desperate mental flight through the ranks of the household, from Mr. Donovan the steward to Tim the stable-boy; and then slowly and unconsciously receiving the idea beating silently in her master's brain, she had made an exclamation of relief.

"Sure, I have the very one for you!"

"Who?"

himself to be won to his housekeeper's point of view!

So time had passed and the old order had changed. But the change had been grave, gradual, eminently in keeping with Carlingford's tastes. The two moments of intoxication—the first when he had taken Peggy's hand upon the cliff, the second when he had conceived the mad desire to startle Mrs. Gallagher by an unveiling of his soul—had



"Mrs. Gallagher, scared and dazed, was twisting her fingers in an agony of apprehension; Peggy was looking straight across the room to the sunlit garden."

"Sure, Peggy! Why not Peggy, that's only left the school these three months, and that was the smartest scholar at the convent? Wasn't the reverend mother for keeping her on altogether, only I wanted her myself about the accounts and things? And besides, she had no wish for teaching. Why not Peggy?"

And Carlingford, intent upon his glass, his heart beating strangely fast, had allowed

found no repetition; he had even blushed occasionally in the darkness of the night when the remembrance of them had touched his mind.

But each morning his fastidious senses had taken infinite pleasure in Peggy's gentle tap upon the study door, and his heart had stirred with an almost youthful anticipation when the door-handle had turned, and the girlish figure in the print dress—sometimes



lilac, sometimes blue—had slipped into the dark library, and the sweet fresh face had smiled him a “Good morning!”

It had all been very perfect, very aloof; no touch of violence had marred the atmosphere. Carlingford, watching the graceful head bent over the task of cataloguing, or lifted at some passing question, had felt as the horticulturist might feel who had transplanted some wild flower into a conservatory, and had set himself with infinite patience and slow satisfaction to watch its development.

With time, the cataloguing of the books had come to an end; but from one task another may reasonably spring, and gradually Peggy's daily routine had become interwoven with his own. Then it was that the idea, fraught with a subtle, secret excitement, had come to him of educating Peggy—to what end he had scarcely dared whisper even to himself.

Morning after morning, therefore, through the mellow autumn, through the black, wet winter, on into the grey, windy spring the two had read together; and, the reading finished, Carlingford had talked and Peggy had listened.

Here, again, a fresh field had opened to him; he had found himself for the first time expounding the exotic theories, the odd turns of thought that had companioned him through his peculiar life. And ever Peggy had listened.

She possessed that invaluable quality, the power of listening intelligently; possessed it in so remarkable a degree that occasionally it had given Carlingford pause; occasionally it had induced him to wonder, with a little spasm of question, whether she was endowed with that essentially feminine organ, a heart; or whether she was merely an intelligence set in a fascinating body.

She had proved herself an ideal scholar, swift and plastic of comprehension, ever eager for information, never tiresomely inquisitive; but beyond that she had remained an enigma. Invariably grateful, invariably respectful, she had received Carlingford's favours with a quiet, impregnable reserve. Sitting in winter at the mahogany table, the fire-light reddening her hair, or, on spring mornings, sitting in the open window, framed by the green leaves of the trailing rose branches, she had been equally a delight to the eye and a problem to the mind of her teacher.

And to Carlingford, despite his doubting moments, she had preserved the ideal pose. At the first touch of familiarity, at the first

hint of appropriation, he would have been off, shy as a hare; but Peggy, the riddle—Peggy, showing no desire to be solved—had held him as no woman had heretofore held him even for an hour.

Exquisitely, meditatively, deliberately, he had set himself to the study and the cultivation of her. Toying with the epicurean joy of the affair, he had proved indeed the horticulturist following the subtle alterations of his snared wild flower; and in the fascinating process a year, two, three, four years passed placidly away.

Those four years had passed, and September, Ireland's most magical month, was gilding all the land. The trees at Carlingford were painted in wondrous hues; the flower-beds on the lawn glowed with heliotrope, lobelia, geraniums; save for the flitting to and fro of the tortoiseshell butterflies, or the occasional falling of a golden beech leaf, the place might have been under an enchantment, so warm, so soundless was the atmosphere.

It was ten o'clock in the morning, and Anthony Carlingford looked at his watch as he walked to the library window, looked at it again as he stood absently gazing over the drowsing lawn, then returned it to his pocket with a movement of almost agitated relief as a knock sounded on the door.

“Come in!” he said, schooling his voice to cool reserve.

The door opened, and he turned hastily away to hide his obvious disappointment.

“Oh, it's you, Mrs. Gallagher! I thought it might have been Peggy!”

“And so it might, Mister Anthony, only for what I came to tell you.” Heavier and less active than she had been four years ago, Mrs. Gallagher looked covetously at a chair.

“Sit down!” said Carlingford with a somewhat ill grace.

“Thank you, Mister Anthony. I will. ’Twas Peggy sent me to ask you to excuse her for a matter of a few minutes. She has a visitor this morning.”

“A visitor?” Usually Carlingford's interest in such a homely detail would have been *nil*, but Peggy's failure to appear had quickened his thought of her. “A visitor?” he repeated, and an uneasy fear touched him that Peggy might be cultivating some friendship made at the Rathpeale school. Peggy had been carefully sheltered from any such lowering influence during the last four years; indeed, Peggy had shown herself most willing to be so sheltered.

“Yes, indeed, a visitor! Dropped out of

the sky, and changed so that his own mother wouldn't know him."

"Him?" said Carlingford in surprise.

"Yes, indeed, Mister Anthony. Patrick Kennedy, back from America!"

"Kennedy?" For a fleeting second his brain failed to place the name, then it came back to him sharply and, with it, the vision of the tall, straight figure and the young, fearless eyes. "Oh, young Kennedy! So America hasn't suited him, after all?"

He walked again to the window and again looked absently out across the lawn to the flower-beds and the butterflies. A curious feeling was kindling in his mind, evoked by the mention of this forgotten name, for it was a name linked with the thought of Peggy—Peggy, whom in his secret heart he likened to a precious stone that he had found and cut and polished, to the end that he should one day wear it, set in pure gold, upon his finger.

"America didn't suit him?" he said again, dreaming his own dream.

Mrs. Gallagher, sitting comfortably back in her chair, smiled with superior wisdom. "Not suit him? All I'd ask is that you'd get one look at him! He's a splendid young man, and on the high road to make a fortune, if we can believe all we're told. 'Pon my word, 'tis a fright sometimes, the cleverness in them galavanting people."

"And why has he come back, if he's doing so well?"

"That's the very question I put to him. And do you know the answer he made me? 'I always said to myself that I'd come home when I had a bit saved; and I always do what I say.'"

"Then he intends to settle here?" Again the slight uneasiness was audible in Carlingford's voice, as when he had suspected Peggy of school-friends.

"Not at all. He's off again at the end of the week. I don't know how they can have the heart for such travelling. 'Tis youth, I suppose."

"Ah, he's off again, is he?" Relief was dominant in Carlingford's tone. Peggy would remain unencumbered.

He turned from the window, satisfied with the world and with Fate, sensible even of a kindly feeling for this young adventurer, whose presence seemed destined to bring him into touch with emotion. For again, as on the night of his great discovery, excitement was waking within him—excitement and the moving temptation to proclaim himself.

"He must find Peggy changed?" he said,

and his tone was lower, less precise than was its wont.

"Changed? Sure, isn't it a lady you've made of her? Isn't it given up to you on all hands?"

The words jarred Carlingford, as it was inevitable they should; but it was a curious tribute to the depth of his feelings that a certain sense of pride warred with the susceptibility.

"It is not given to any of us to create, Mrs. Gallagher," he said stiffly. "We may only bring to light what already exists. Peggy was always what you term 'a lady.'"

"She was always a nice girl—though a curious girl, keeping herself to herself like."

"Unlike the common herd, yes!" he said softly and to himself; then with a strange suddenness, as if touched by an inspiration, he turned to his housekeeper, his pale face tinged with colour, his excitement at work about the corners of his mouth.

"Mrs. Gallagher, you have been a good servant to me—I might say a good friend——"

His tone was new, his manner uncatalogued in Mrs. Gallagher's memory of him; and at the signs her mouth opened, the reddish-purple of her cheeks changed to an odd hue, and she rose tremulously to her feet. The dread of dismissal that stalks all old servants had materialised in her sight. Carlingford was about to replace her!

"Oh, Mister Anthony——" There her voice failed.

But Carlingford was absorbed in his own concerns, his own amazing decision.

"You have been a good friend, and it is only right——" But his words also died. He started; the flush upon his face deepened, as a familiar knock fell upon the door.

"Oh, Mister Anthony——"

But her piteous voice touched deaf ears; already Carlingford was at the door, already he was holding it deferentially open for Peggy to enter.

His attitude was unmistakable—the attitude of the knight to his lady; but neither woman observed it. Mrs. Gallagher, scared and dazed, was twisting her fingers in an agony of apprehension; Peggy was looking straight across the room to the sunlit garden.

"Mister Anthony——" said Mrs. Gallagher again, moving towards him.

But at her approach, Carlingford drew himself up. "Mrs. Gallagher," he said in the distant and chilly manner that all his

dependents knew and none could combat, "the matter I had to discuss with you must wait; I am busy now."

And trembling, hesitating, inwardly composing prayers and ejaculations, Mrs. Gallagher went, closing the door behind her.

Carlingford turned, and his eyes drank in the beauty of Peggy.

For four years he had enshrined the vision of the ethereal, weeping creature, half girl, half child; now for the first time he saw the woman, exquisitely young, innocently seductive, the woman with her infinite appeal. A faint giddiness seized him—a dread of her, an acute consciousness of himself, that overthrew all previous calculations.

"Peggy!" he said.

And Peggy turned from the window, the September sunlight enshrining her in a nimbus.

"Yes, Mr. Carlingford?"

The quietness, the restraint of the reply unnerved him. The myriad sentences that had been forming and disintegrating in his brain forsook him utterly.

"Are you ready to work?" was all he could find to say.

"Quite ready," she answered; and coming round the old mahogany table, she took a seat beside the pile of books that had been placed in readiness for the morning's reading.

Very nervously Carlingford took his place.

"What is it we were doing? I—I declare I have forgotten!"

Peggy looked at him straightly with her wonderful eyes. "Don't you remember we were reading English poetry? We had got to Browning. You were just beginning 'Any wife to any husband' when Mr. Donovan sent for you."

She took up a small volume from the pile of books and handed it to him. Something contracted in his throat as her hand inadvertently brushed his, but he received the book with stiff precision.

"Oh, yes, I remember! I had read the first verse. Shall I begin again?"

"Please!" Peggy settled herself to listen, her elbows on the table, her face between her hands, her eyes dreamily resting upon the flower-beds and their butterflies.

The first six lines of the poem passed and she made no sign; then came the second verse, Carlingford's voice steady.

I have but to be by thee, and thy hand  
Would never let mine go, thy heart withstand  
The beating of my heart to reach its place.  
When should I look for thee and feel thee gone?  
When cry for the old comfort and find none?  
Never, I know! Thy soul is in thy face.

A faint, emotional shudder passed through Peggy's frame. Unconsciously her fingers unlaced themselves and covered her eyes, shutting out the dreaming garden.

Slowly, wonderfully, the poem wove itself into meaning, Carlingford's refined voice touching it with delicate respect; at last came the sixteenth verse—the sixteenth verse with its limitless comprehension and sublime declaration of human love.

Re-coin thyself and give it them to spend—  
It all comes to the same thing at the end,  
Since mine thou wast, mine art, and mine shall be,  
Faithful or faithless, sealing up the sum  
Or lavish of my treasure, thou must come  
Back to the heart's place here I keep for thee!

With a little swift movement, Peggy's hands dropped from her face; and Carlingford, looking across at her, saw tears trembling in her lashes, a transfiguring light in the blue-green eyes.

"Browning is very subtle," he said, scarcely conscious of his words. "Paradoxical, perhaps, but——"

"Oh, it isn't that, at all!" cried Peggy. "It isn't that, at all! It's that he *knew*! He *knew*!"

Amazement gripped Carlingford—amazement, and a joy so keen as almost to be fear.

"Knew what?" he asked below his breath.

"Love!" said Peggy, and her voice caught and her cheeks burned with a sweet mingling of courage and of shame.

The slow blood mounted to Carlingford's brain.

"Peggy," he said, "do you know that you are telling me that you yourself *know*?"

He rose to his feet; he looked down at the fair young face, at the soul shining in the eyes—his creation, his possession.

"Peggy," he said, "you are telling me that you yourself know love!"

Peggy met his eyes, the sweet courage, the sweeter shame burning in her face.

"And—and I do!" she cried; and, light as one of the butterflies in the garden, she was across the room and gone before Carlingford could put forth his hands.

\* \* \* \* \*

That day was one of upheaval for Anthony Carlingford. With Peggy's departure, self-control left him, and without thought or question he opened the door and hurried after her towards the servant's quarters; but at the green baize door that separated Mrs. Gallagher's kingdom from his own, panic seized him and, like a guilty man, he turned

and fled back along the passages to the square-built, sombre hall. Here on a table were lying the stick and the soft felt hat that he had laid aside on returning from a walk before breakfast; and, picking them up, he left the house with the secret haste of a criminal.

How and where he spent the hours of that fateful day must remain a mystery. The notable facts stand out that he did not return to Carlingford for lunch, that he did not return to Carlingford for dinner; for in certain conditions—in great exaltation or great agony—the body exists upon emotion—is lifted above common needs by the domination of the mind.

The hushed afternoon of that September day found him walking over the low, rugged shoulder of themountain that guards Rathpeale; the fall of night found him still walking—but walking along the cliff track above the sea, his face set towards home.

To every man his hour! Anthony Carlingford—the solitary, the sentimentalist—was in touch with the universe, at one with the stars and the earth, as he paced along the familiar way. Strange wild scents, distilled by the night, came sharp to his nostrils; the wind, soft as a woman's whisper, touched his face and murmured in his ear. Above, the golden moon seemed a lamp hung down from heaven; below, the sea slept and dreamed under its celestial rays.

His eyes lingered upon the secret, silent mystery of water, following the moon-track from the rocks to the horizon; and as he looked, a ship sailed into the light, as if in

answer to his thoughts—a shadowy creature with scarce-filled canvas, coming out of nowhere, bound for some port unknown.

He stopped involuntarily, and the place of his stopping was the point where, four years ago, he had paused in answer to Peggy's crying.

The boat came on—a phantom ship with black hull, gaunt masts, half-filled sails that drooped like a moth's wings. On she came, and on; and as she stole into the full wonder of the moon's trail, a voice spoke suddenly out of the darkness.

"Do you remember another ship we watched like that—one night on this self-same cliff?"

And another voice replied—a voice that caught at Carlingford's throat like some stealthy, springing animal.

"Is it likely I'd forget?"

The instincts of a man are strange, unruly things. That Anthony Carlingford, of Carlingford, should play the part of caves-dropper would have been incredibly

able, would have been impossible, twenty-four hours ago; but now, standing alone in the autumn night, leaning upon his stick as if for support, he knew himself tied by some power that outrode honour, outdistanced breeding. Body and soul were concentrated upon the unseen speakers, sheltered by the heather and the rocks.

"And do you remember the queer things we said that night—and we only children? And the way you put your little arms around my neck, and said I was to save you from Red Michael and Mary Cassidy and the rest of the blackguard gang? Peggy!" The tone dropped. "Peggy, do the same again



"Their faces touched."

now! I've dreamt of it these thousand nights—the feel of your arms around my neck, the feel of your lips against my ear!”

Carlingford stood rigid. His senses seemed to have acquired a strange acuteness—a power to reach out into the night and convey their messages to his brain with a completeness inconceivable. He heard Peggy's caught breath; he heard the light movement of her body; he knew with sick distinctness that the man's arms were round her and that their faces touched.

“Peggy! Peggy! You knew I'd save you? You knew I'd come back for you?”

Then the faint stir, as Peggy drew away from her lover; the moment of intense quiet in which she answered—answered in the voice of the morning, vibrating with passion, thrilling with conviction.

“I always knew—always! Though you never wrote, and the time was like eternity, still I knew. If I didn't, how could I have gone on living in that grand, big prison of a house?”

“My darling!” All the subtlety, all the simplicity of human love was enfolded in the two short words.

“And now—now it's over! And all the sunshine in the world is for me—and every flower—and every star! Oh, I feel like as if my heart would break! Oh, Patsy, how could you care for me like this? How could you come back for me all this way, with the world full of other women?”

A long silence followed the passionate question, a silence charged with meaning; then again came the man's voice, strong in the enunciation of a truth.

“There're plenty of women in the world, Peggy; but there's only one wife for me!”

Some thin, chill wind seemed to sweep over Carlingford, withering his imagery, fluttering his poor garment of egoism. The voice that assailed his ears was the triumphing voice of life, the voice of which he had no knowledge.

“Peggy! Peggy!” it cried. “Let your mind rest on it! You and me! You and me—sailing away like that ship in the moonlight! You and me—with all the bad times behind us, and not a soul on earth to help or hinder us! It's like as if it was a miracle!”

The voice broke off, and, vivid as a seen picture, Carlingford conjured the clasp, the kiss, the fusion of mind with mind.

Another silence; and again the man's words, broken with tenderness—

“You're happy, girlie? You're happy?”

And Peggy's voice, like the enraptured voice of a dream: “I think it must be heaven!”

And then once more the man, speaking with a sudden inspiration, a blind faith not to be refuted.

“Heaven, do you say? It's more than heaven. It's life, girlie! It's life!”

And Carlingford, hearing, turned and walked away.

## WHEN IT RAINS.

**WHEN** the night shuts down with wind and rain  
Across the hills and the fields of grain,

I hear the rustle of wind-blown sheaves,

The drip, drip, drip of rain on the leaves;

And again I ride, the dark defied,

Through the wind and rain with you by my side.

We feel the sweep of the lush-wet grass

That reaches toward us as we pass;

We glimpse, through distant window-panes,

The blur of lights—while it rains and rains;

We catch the beat of the horses' feet,

We breathe the breath of the forest sweet.

Oh, to ride once more through the night and rain,

To ride and to come back home again!

To see the blaze of the logs of pine,

Your hair's wet gold where the rain-drops shine,

To hear the blast—the journey past—

To be safe at home with you at last!

ALICE E. ALLEN.

# THE SCIENTIST AND THE SHOP-GIRL.

By ROBERT BARR.



HE would not have expected such behaviour from one so grave and sedate in appearance. He edged closer and closer to the girl, who, quite unconscious of his proximity, gazed through the clear

plate-glass window at the ladies' hats marked down to sale prices. She was absorbed in this contemplation, regardless of the passers-by, or of the man twice her age who stood so close to her. She was plainly, but very neatly dressed. Her pale face, though it could not be termed beautiful, possessed an attractive, intellectual quality when you looked twice at her. If gifted with imagination, it is possible that a third observation might stimulate the fancy that she would be very attractive if she smiled, but it was easy to believe that her lips were strangers to smiles. Her outlook upon life was serious, notwithstanding the fact that she squandered some of the scant time allotted to lunch in viewing the attractive feminine headgear behind the pane.

The premature stooping of the shoulders distinguished the man by her side as a student of some sort, old before his time. His brow was lined with thought; his attire careless, threadbare, almost shabby, as befits one who pursues knowledge rather than riches.

Once or twice he moistened his lips and seemed about to address her, but his courage oozed away with a side glance that she gave, and thus he stood there silent. He knew perfectly well who she was, for of late, passing down Oxford Street, he had seen her behind the counter of a glove-shop.

For three consecutive days now he had haunted this section of the thoroughfare during the luncheon hour. He had followed her from the glove-shop to the A.B.C. restaurant where she partook of her frugal midday meal—a cup of cocoa and a plate of buttered toast. Several times he endeavoured to accost her, but never got even

far enough to attract her attention. He was disheartened by this lack of valour, but nevertheless persisted, in spite of his repeated failures to take the plunge when opportunity came.

At last the girl withdrew her eyes from the attractive spectacle before her, and heaved a sigh of disappointment, for even the red figures marking down the cheapest of the hats were beyond the resources of her slender purse. Intuitively the unworldly man grasped the worldliness of the situation; she coveted a hat, but had no money to spare with which to purchase one, yet here was he, hesitating to make offer of what she so evidently lacked. Now was the Heaven-sent, psychological moment; the need and its remedy in conjunction. He took the plunge awkwardly as a drunken man stumbling off a bridge.

The girl shuddered as she felt his touch on her shoulder, and the contemplative eyes quickly turned upon him became wide open and shaded with apprehension.

"I—I will buy any hat in that shop you care to select——"

He got no further. The girl fled down the crowded street, while he stood there, dismayed, watching her hurrying figure thread its way through the multitude. Once she looked over her shoulder in affright, but seeing she was not followed, moderated her pace. After passing the accustomed A.B.C. shop, and watching for an opportunity through the traffic, she threaded her way to the other side, then, eagerly doubling back, re-crossed the street and reached the haven where gloves were sold.

Staunton Blair saw with regret the inconvenience he had caused, but he knew of no method to remedy it. Unversed as he was in the ways of his fellow-beings, he surmised it would not be the correct thing to buy some sandwiches at the A.B.C. and present them to her in the glove-shop, therefore, rather depressed in spirits, he turned out of the busy street, made his way northward to a poverty-stricken district, and climbing the stairs of a forbidding house, arrived at his own room, quite forgetting that he, too, had missed his lunch.



The carpetless room he entered resembled a chemist's shop that had taken to drink and fallen into disrepute. The shelves were cluttered with bottles of all shapes and sizes, some corked, others with glass stoppers. Apparatus of various kinds presented a makeshift appearance, much of it painfully constructed from odds and ends that possessed no suitability except cheapness, while other machinery had plainly been discarded by more opulent users, and acquired second-hand. There were many books scattered about much the worse for wear. Scientific volumes bought at an old book-store present an advantage and a disadvantage. First, there being little demand for them, they are cheap; secondly, being old, they are usually out of date.

A long, plain deal table, much stained, occupied the centre of the room, and seated before it were three lads, who rose respectfully when Mr. Blair entered.

"I am very sorry, boys," he said. "I have been detained. Please sit down again."

He plunged at once into the lesson he was to teach, and now there was no hesitation in his speech. All languor left his loosely jointed frame, and his kindly, rugged face seemed to glow from the enthusiasm within. He spoke with magical clarity and animation, making plain the intricacies of chemistry with which he dealt. He was now in the world to which he belonged, a world unperturbed by the swish of a woman's skirts.

When the lads had decorously withdrawn, bidding him "Good afternoon" (it was plain that all three were completely enthralled by a master who never uttered a harsh word to them), Staunton Blair sat down on a bench and sank into a deep pondering. He was quite determined not to give up the quest, but thought it might be advisable to change his method. Why not write to her? But, then, he did not know her name, and if he addressed his note to "The girl at the left-hand counter," the letter might be received by someone else. Still, what difference did that make? He had scarcely noticed the other girls, but doubtless one of them would do just as well as she who seemed so frightened at his address. Then, to his surprise, he found himself shaking his head. After all, he would much prefer this particular girl, who seemed quiet, modest, and lady-like. At last he came to a conclusion, and next day put it into action.

At eleven o'clock the following morning, bold as a buccaneer boarding a brig, Blair entered the glove-shop, hoping his courage

would stand by him for the next few minutes. There were several customers within, but the girl he sought was disengaged for the moment. He strode directly towards her, and she, seeing his approach and recognising him, shrank back against the cardboard boxes on the shelves behind her, her eyelids fluttering with fear. No slave was more helpless at the menace of a master. She dared not make a fuss nor complain against a customer. Customers are sacred and must not be offended. It was her place to serve politely—cringingly, if need be—but on no account to allow that man to leave the shop without having made a purchase. She might smile or flirt or simper, and the Argus eyes to the rear of the place would be blind, so long as something was sold; but if any inattention on her part caused the possible buyer to turn away, then came a reckoning with the proprietor.

Perturbed as she was, she wondered whether a man with a face so simple and homely knew, after all, how completely the situation put her in his power. He was not of the type of those who pester a girl with unwished-for attentions, and yet he was the same person who yesterday had spoken to her in the street, and from whom she had fled.

He addressed her quietly (that was a blessing), with the quietness of one who has learned his words by rote.

"Miss, I must have a few words with you. It is very important: important both for you and for me. Will you grant me an interview?"

"Sir," she said, also very quietly, "I am here to sell gloves."

"Very good, I have come in to buy a pair."

"What number, please?"

"Two, of course."

"I mean, what is the size of your hand?"

"Oh, my hand! I don't know, I'm sure. I never wore a pair of gloves in my life."

From a shelf behind her she took down a tape measure.

"Please extend your hand."

"Wait a moment; wait a moment. Surely you do not hurry your customers thus? You give them time to choose, select, think, do you not?"

"Certainly, sir."

Her hands dropped to her sides, the tape line dangling from her fingers. Once more she leaned back against the cardboard boxes, and now having recovered, as it were, from her first fright, she looked across at him, and was astonished to see that he appeared

more perturbed than she was. Little sparkles of perspiration stood on his brow, and absent-mindedly he drew the back of his ungloved hand across it.

"It isn't gloves for myself I want," he said at last.

"For a lady, perhaps?" she suggested.

"Yes; a pair of ladies' gloves."

"What size, please?" reiterated the girl, putting the measuring tape on the shelf again.

Blair was evidently in a quandary once more. He breathed like a man who is running a race. The interval this time was so long that the shop-girl had more and more opportunity to study the stranger on the other side of the counter. Her quick intuition told her several surprising things, and upset one or two previously formed opinions. She supposed that the man's persistence arose from admiration of herself, and was astonished at the feeling of pique which arose in her heart when she became convinced that he wasn't thinking of her at all. His mind was a slow-working instrument, and the dilemma in which he found himself involved changed its phases so rapidly that he felt a humiliating sense of discomfiture. The more alert intelligence of the girl, accustomed as she was to meet all sorts of people, showed her that he, and not she, occupied the disadvantageous position. It was with no sinister appreciation of her helplessness that he had entered the shop, and she suspected that he wished himself well out of it, but that some dogged element in his nature rooted him to the spot.

Having misjudged him in the beginning, her sympathy was now extended towards him. She wondered whether he was sane—if he knew exactly what he was doing.

"Don't you know the size the lady wears?"

"No, I don't."

"I suppose," she ventured, bringing her shapely hand into view, "that she wears smaller gloves than I do?"

This remark inspired Staunton Blair with an idea, and his clouded face cleared.

"Her hand is exactly the same size and shape as yours."

"Ah, then we shall have no difficulty. What colour, please?"

"Eh? What colour? I'm sure I don't know. Green, blue, yellow—anything you like. What colour do *you* wear?"

She did not reply, but, turning, took down a pasteboard box, opened it, and spread out a pair of gloves on a piece of tissue paper she had placed on the counter.

"Do you think those would suit?" she asked.

"Oh, perfectly. I'm sure of it. I'll take them."

He drew from his wallet a five-pound note and placed it before her.

"Haven't you anything smaller than that?"

"No," he said, "I want the change."

She called a shop-boy, gave him the note and the price-slip, which he carried to a desk at the rear. The gloves she wrapped up very daintily in the tissue paper, and was about to cover this with brown paper, when Blair drew a lead-pencil from his waistcoat pocket and said abruptly—

"Wait a minute."

She paused, and he wrote his name and address on the brown paper.

"Oh, you wish them sent?"

"No, I don't. Listen to what I say before that boy returns. You will take four pounds and this address of mine. You will engage a detective, and ask him to learn all he can about me. I don't know where you will find one, but anyone else can tell you. I am really a most harmless person—a tutor of sorts, and a student in chemistry. I know no woman on earth except my landlady. Of course, naturally you distrust a stranger, and I am very awkward so far as women are concerned. You will hear from the detective, however, that I am honest, and that you may quite safely grant me an interview of ten minutes or so."

"Even if the detective confirmed all you say, I see no reason why I should grant you the interview."

"I cannot explain here. Meet me somewhere, listen to what I offer, and then decide to do as I wish, or not, just as you like."

"But you can tell me in a word what your offer is?"

"Well, I want you to accept a better situation."

"I am quite satisfied where I am."

"Then you have no one dependent on you?"

The girl gave a little gasp and leaned back a third time against the boxes.

"Yes," she said in a whisper, speaking more to herself than to him. "Yes, I have someone dependent on me."

"You can use more money than you earn here?"

"Oh, yes."

"Very well. You would be foolish not to listen, wouldn't you?"

"I suppose so. There's no harm in listening."

The boy came back with the change. Blair pushed towards the girl four sovereigns, but she ignored them, dexterously wrapping up the gloves.

"Shall I send them to this address?"

"No; keep them. I don't want them." But she pushed the little parcel towards him in such a way that the money was shoved before it.

"I do not need the advice of a detective. I can see that you are an honest man. I will meet you to-day where you spoke to me yesterday. Please put the money into your pocket; the gloves also. No; you must not leave them. You embarrass me with your hesitation. Do at once what I tell you."

He slipped the four sovereigns into his waistcoat pocket, and, taking the gloves in his hand, walked out of the shop as directly and as awkwardly as he had entered it.

He seemed a rather woebegone figure as he stood before the plate-glass window which displayed the ladies' hats, and the girl took him in charge as if she, and not he, were the pursuer. Without a word she led him down a side street until they reached the Embankment, but did not turn into the gardens as he had expected, making her way instead across the broad thoroughfare to the granite parapet overlooking the river.

Leaning against the parapet, she turned to him.

"I am ready to listen."

"You said you had someone dependent on you," he began. "That person is not a husband?"

"Oh, no. He is my little brother, seven years old. We are alone in the world."

"Are you in love with anyone?"

"Is it to talk like this you have asked me to meet you?"

"We must clear the ground, you know. You will understand later."

"No; I am not in love, and never have been, and never will be."

"I hope not," sighed Blair, so fervently that she looked up at him in surprise.

Again the thought occurred to her that this man was not in his right mind. He went on, however, without noticing her amazement.

"The situation is this. My only sister, who was much older than I, married a man much older than herself. He was a harsh, miserly person, but, they tell me, a very good business man. My sister lived most unhappily

with him. He always hated me, and so far as my poor sister was concerned, it would have been much better had I died in my infancy. She managed to give me a University course, and thus put me in the way of earning my own living, which I do. She died about ten years ago. Her husband died last month. I don't know why, having been brought up by so good and so devoted a sister, I should feel such fear of women as is the case. My brother-in-law left a will which he knew would embarrass me. He was well aware that I possessed no business qualifications whatever—that I never could make much money for myself; and he also knew that in my researches I needed money every day of my life for apparatus, for chemicals, and for what not. Personally I should be content to live on half-rations, or even starve occasionally, could I get what I need to aid me in my researches. Knowing all this, he has left me a splendid estate on condition that I marry within two months, otherwise the money goes to an asylum of some kind.

"Of course, I have no wish to marry, but on the other hand, I shall probably see my life frittered away and nullified through lack of money.

"I have studied this predicament night and day ever since the contents of the will were made known to me; and now, if I am to act, I must do so very speedily. I don't mind poverty, if I could but get the appliances I need. I have no desire for wealth, but it occurred to me that if I could meet someone as poor as myself, one not likely ever to marry——"

"Why do you think I am unlikely ever to marry?" asked the girl sharply.

"You said so, only a little while ago."

"But you selected me for your proposal before I said that. Did you judge from my appearance that no man would ask me to marry him?"

"No, no. I didn't think about the matter at all. Your appearance had nothing to do with what was in my mind," he explained earnestly.

"I believe you. Go on, please."

"There is nothing much more to say. If you will agree to marry me, I promise faithfully to leave you at the church door. I'll never molest you, and will settle upon you one-half the income, so that you may be as independent as I."

"How much is the income?" she asked, with quite her sales-counter intonation.

"The solicitor said it was about five thousand pounds a year."



“I promise faithfully  
to leave you at the  
church door.”

“Five thousand pounds! Oh, I should never consent to take half of that.”

“Very good; I’ll give you more. I don’t suppose I shall need so much as four hundred. You may have all the rest.”

“I didn’t mean it that way at all. Two thousand five hundred pounds a year is too much. You don’t need to say you are a poor business man, for anyone can see it. If you’ll settle upon me four hundred pounds a year, I’ll marry you under those conditions to-morrow, next week, or any time you like.”

“My dear girl,” said Blair earnestly, “you do not estimate correctly the disability under which you place yourself. You are

young and beautiful. Although you said you would never fall in love with anyone, you cannot be sure of that, and if such an event should happen, you would bitterly regret having tied yourself to me.”

“There is no fear of that. Four hundred pounds will be more than enough.”

“No; I will compromise on a thousand pounds, if you like, but not a penny less.”

“What you propose is robbery. I shall not accept it.”

“But I insist.”

“Then I must bid you ‘Good-bye.’” She held out her hand.

“You are forgetting your brother. You will want to send him to the University

and establish him in some profession. A thousand pounds will prove scanty enough when that time comes."

Her hand dropped to her side.

"Yes," she said, "I was forgetting my brother."

"Then we will get into a taxicab and go direct to a solicitor, who will draw up the settlement."

"I must go back to the glove-shop."

"Nonsense! On a thousand a year?"

"I must give due notice and buy my liberty."

"I'll see the proprietor and compensate him."

"No; you'd be cheated. I cannot allow anyone to cheat you but myself. This sordid bargain I have made with you is a very model of chicanery."

"I don't see that," he protested. "The compact you have made may prove to be a very onerous one."

"You mean, should I wish to marry some other person? That is just the point where my deep duplicity shows itself. I had long ago made up my mind never to marry. I proposed to work hard and faithfully until my brother was educated, and then, when he was able to make money, I should leave the shop and keep house for him; thus, you see, I am a rogue, accepting a lavish amount of money from you for doing what I intended to do in any case."

"You forget, miss, that the benefits are mutual, only that I get four times the best of the bargain. To put it mathematically, I aid you towards an income of a thousand a year, but you cause me to inherit four thousand; thus I, as well as you, am enabled to order my life according to my own choosing."

"But any other woman could have done that for you as well as I. Why did you not marry your housekeeper?"

"She is a most slovenly person," said Blair quite seriously, as if the thought had already occurred to him, "repulsively ugly, and nearly fifty. I believe she already possesses a husband, although I have never seen him. Besides, she drinks. Then, I wished to marry someone who would leave me alone, and that my landlady would never have done, surrounded as she is by friends rapacious and disreputable as herself."

Again the girl seemed disappointed that there was no evidence of even an awakening interest in herself on his part. They walked along the Embankment in silence for a time, until an empty taxicab came along, which

he hailed. Again she demurred. Duty called and she felt compelled to obey.

"Oh, never mind the proprietor of the glove-shop," he said. "We will telephone to him when we reach the lawyer's office, and you can call there to-morrow, and give him what compensation you please."

They were now seated together in the cab.

"If we are quick about it," he went on,

"I think we can be married to-day."

"Oh!" cried the girl, with a little gasp of dismay, "why are you in such a hurry?"

"Well, you see, I'm rather an absent-minded sort of person, and I always expect to be run over while crossing a street. If that happened before we were married, even though the papers were drawn out settling on you the thousand pounds, my death would render them null and void. My brother-in-law's wealth would never have been in my possession, you see."

This remark was so blamelessly practical that it called for no answer, and received none. The girl went off on a side issue.

"You have never even inquired my name," she protested.

"True. What is your name?" he asked abruptly.

For a time she did not speak, then answered quietly—

"Edith Melcomb."

"My name you know, of course."

"Yes."

The taxicab penetrated into the crowded City, and drew up before a sombre building.

"Here we are," said Blair, with a sigh of relief. "This man upstairs was my late brother-in-law's solicitor, and has charge of all the arrangements."

The legal arrangements took longer to adjust than Staunton Blair had supposed, and more than a week elapsed before the marriage took place, celebrated by a business-like registrar, witnessed by two businesslike clerks from the solicitor's office; and finally the scientist accompanied the bride to a hansom, where he shook hands with her, gave the cabman a Chelsea address, and turned away with that sense of relief which a scientific person feels when he has brought a somewhat tiresome scientific experiment to a successful conclusion.

A month from that day, Staunton Blair, in his shirt-sleeves, with hair wildly dishevelled, was absorbed in a distillation when his landlady entered, who more than made good the description he had given of her tawdriness.

"A lady to see you, sir."

Blair straightened himself up in alarm.

"A lady?" he echoed. "What does she want."

"Didn't say, sir. Wanted to see Mr. Staunton Blair."

"A lady!" he muttered. "What can she want with me? Did she give any name?"

"No, sir. Seems a rich young woman, by the look of her clothes, and came in a carriage."

"Who can she be? There must be some mistake! Tell her so; but if she won't go away, bring her up here. I suppose it can't be helped."

When the lady entered, she stood for a few minutes near the door, glancing first at the astonished, tramp-like man before her, and then around at the disorderly room.

"Don't you know me?" she asked at last.

"Why, yes," he stammered. "You're—you're the girl in the glove-shop."

"No, I am not. I am Mrs. Staunton Blair. My husband is a genius in the scientific world, they tell me, sure to become famous. I clipped a short article about him from this morning's newspaper, and in case he has not seen it, I have brought it to him."

She laid the newspaper cutting on the table before him. He picked it up and read it, looking rather dazed.

"No; I hadn't noticed it; but it is all wrong," he explained. "I fear one of my pupils has rather given me away to some writing man."

"Then you should send a letter to the journal and contradict it."

"Oh, it doesn't matter; it doesn't matter in the least. If it had appeared in a scientific publication, I should have done so, but then a scientific publication wouldn't have printed so erroneous an account."

"Well, it wasn't about the extract that I came to see you, after all; and, by the way, before I say anything further, do you consider this visit an interference on my part?"

"Interference? I'm afraid I don't understand."

"Why, don't you remember our marriage contract? One of us was not to molest the other. Is my coming here an infraction of that contract?"

"Dear me, no. You can come here as often as you like. Won't you sit down?"

Once more she glanced around the room and smiled. The chairs, of a very cheap and common pattern, were all piled with manuscript, jars, packages, and other *débris*. In his confusion at endeavouring to remedy the condition that nullified his invitation,

he scattered a miscellaneous assortment on the floor, and the girl laughed outright.

"Never mind," she said. "I can't stop for more than a moment."

His face had become very red, and he did not appear to know where to put his hands. The metal dish above the Bunsen burner was boiling over, but he did not notice it.

"I suppose it's vanity on my part, for I've some detestable qualities, but I wished you to know that I was not always a shop-girl, as you called me just now. I am reasonably well educated, having been taught by my father, who was a clergyman. We were always very poor, but we passed for gentle-folk."

"Oh, I knew that from the beginning."

"Who told you?"

"I wasn't told. I just seemed to know it was so."

"Then you are not offended at my visiting you?"

"Certainly not."

"Good-bye," she said abruptly, reaching her hand across the table.

Gingerly he took her neatly gloved fingers. Next instant she had vanished.

It was during the depth of winter that Mrs. Blair paid her second call, and it required some bravery for a woman to emerge from comfortable quarters into the streets that day. A dense yellow fog brooded over the town, and her coachman experienced some difficulty in finding his way through the gloom. The landlady came up the uncertain stairs with uncertain steps. She had been taking a little something to mitigate the effect of the fog.

"That same lady," she said thickly, "that called before, is here again."

She looked waveringly, but severely, at her shrinking lodger.

As showing the eternal fitness of things, Blair's candles were all in bottles. He seized one, pushed aside his inebriated housekeeper, and dashed down the stairs. The tall lady in furs smiled up at him. He was as unkempt as ever, and throttling a bottle by the neck that held a guttering candle, haloed by the fog, he resembled some quaint demon of the Middle Ages engaged in alchemy.

"May I come up?" she asked.

"Of course. I came down for you. Steer clear of the landlady," he whispered. "She's a little overcome by the effect of the weather. Beastly day, isn't it?"

"It's not very pleasant," answered his wife, as she followed him into his dismal den. She closed the door behind her, for



the honest housekeeper was clutching the railings of the narrow landing, and Mrs. Staunton Blair feared she might fall into the laboratory among the chemicals. As before, she stood and looked about her. The squalid room did not run even to a lamp, not to mention gas or electricity. Five candles of various lengths, four in the necks of bottles and one in a jug, scattered their feeble light around a glass retort suspended over a blue flame.

"Still in a rag and bottle shop, Mr. Blair, I see," she said, with a smile.

"It's sufficient, rather than luxurious," admitted the chemist.

"I think," continued the girl, with a laugh, "it must be the landlady's fault. If she clings to her lodger as she does to her railings, no wonder he cannot get away. How do you ever carry on successful experiments in a dungeon like this?"

"Oh, well, if it comes to that, Michael Faraday, you know, made some great discoveries with a few old medicine bottles and a clay pipe or two."

"I venture to believe he couldn't have done it in such a light as this."

She now came further into the room than had been the case before, examining the scrawled labels on the bottles and jars.

"Your landlady is addicted to gin, I suppose?"

"Oh, well," explained Blair, who could not speak ill of anyone, "to-day is exceptional. The fog gets into her throat, she tells me."

"Yes, and other fluids as well," commented the smiling girl. "I am judging not by her attitude on the landing, but merely by the labels on most of these bottles. They are guaranteed to contain the best unsweetened gin, except where you have covered over the words with your own labels. I never before saw such a slovenly arrangement of dangerous material. Why, look at this!" she cried, taking up a broad-mouthed jar and shaking it. "You keep your carbide of calcium in a jar with a plain cork! In this moist climate it should have had a glass stopper."

"I know that," pleaded Blair, "but I lost the stopper."

She placed the jar on the table before her, and took out the cork, sniffing a little at the substance within.

"Just as I thought," she said. "It is disintegrated, and nearly useless." She took up a thick bradawl that lay on the table and bored a hole in the centre of the broad cork.

"That will make it worse than ever," objected Blair.

"No, it won't. Be my assistant, please, and give me a No. 8 glass tube."

Obediently he handed her what she asked for, and she thrust it through the cork.

"Now a carafe of  $H_2 O$ ."

He handed her the water-jug.

"I hope you know what you are doing," he cautioned, at which she laughed merrily, pouring the water into the jar. The nervous scientist hastily blew out four of the candles, and removed the other to the further end of the room. The pungent, disagreeable odour of acetylene gas made itself noticeable. The young lady's dainty fingers thrust the cork into its place, and she stood for a time admiring her handiwork, bending down her head now and again to the top of the glass tube, with a quick sniff estimating the strength of the gas. Then she struck a match, and in spite of the man's shout of "Look out!" held it over the jar. There was a little sudden pop, then a steady pure white flame that penetrated even the fog to the furthest corner of the apartment. She stood in the radiance, a charmingly costumed vision of beauty, and Staunton Blair was much more dazzled by her appearance than by the sun-white flame.

She smiled across at him.

" $C_2 H_2$  is all right," she said, "if not diluted too much with that familiar compound which, speaking by weight, is oxygen 23, nitrogen 75.66, and argon 1.34. Your landlady would doubtless call it 'h'air.'"

Staunton gazed at her in astonishment, but seemed struck into speechlessness.

"Well," she said, with a laugh and a sigh, "at last I've made you look at me."

"My dear girl," he exclaimed, "where did you learn all this?"

"Oh, I have been taking lessons in chemistry. I married a chemist, you know, and so I thought it well to know something of the Black Art. I am a pupil of the renowned Professor Marling."

"Marling!" sneered Blair. "That incompetent charlatan! Always writing about himself and his precious so-called discoveries in the ignorant newspapers."

"My dear sir, Professor Marling is the most charming of men. He teaches a class of more than forty pupils."

"I dare say. It is always the biggest quack that gathers the greatest number of patients. He's no scientific man—he's what we call a popularity hunter."

"Are your three pupils still with you?" she asked sweetly.



“‘Why, yes,’ he stammered, ‘you’re—you’re the girl in the glove-shop.’”

"Yes. I'm not on the search for pupils. I am engaged in serious work, and will be quite content with the approval of my colleagues, if I deserve it."

"Ah, that approval Professor Marling seems not to have attained."

"No, he hasn't. What he's after is the applause of the crowd."

"Strange that I should have thought him so courteous and so learned a man. I enjoy special opportunities of studying him, because I am not in his large class, but take private lessons from him. He told me yesterday that he has never met a pupil so apt in chemical research as I."

"Fudge! Stuff and nonsense! What, in less than four months? Don't you believe it!"

"But I like to believe it. I *do* believe it."

"You are taking *private* lessons from him, eh?"

"Yes, and have been for some time."

"Look here, my girl, if you'll take lessons from me, I guarantee that in six months you'll be so far outside the range of Professor Marling's knowledge that he won't be able to understand you when you talk. Blow Professor Marling!"

Staunton Blair had worked himself into a state of such indignation and contempt that for the first time since she had known him, he spoke up like a man. She laughed quietly.

"Will you give me lessons, then?"

"Will I? Of course I will. How often can you come——" he paused abruptly and looked round the dismal room. It was palpable even to his comprehension that this trim figure, so nice, so dainty, did not belong to such a squalid wilderness.

"It is about that I came to see you," she said, taking no notice of his abrupt halt. "Professor Marling has become so successful, and his classes have augmented to such an extent, that he has been forced to give up his flat and take larger premises. Oh, yes, I know, I know! He's a humbug and all that, but, nevertheless, as I told you, he's a most delightful man, and has been very, *very* attentive to me."

"Has he?" said the chemist.

"Yes, no one could have been more kind. But as I was saying, he has given up this flat, which contains nine rooms and a laboratory—oh, so conveniently fitted up, everything arranged so spick and span——"

"Quite so, quite so. Faraday and his clay pipe would have been turned out of it as something incongruous."

"Oh, come now, Mr. Blair, do be fair to

Michael Faraday. Surely you are aware that later in life, when he got on, he possessed one of the best-equipped laboratories in the world. Still, that has nothing to do with what I was about to tell you. I have taken Professor Marling's studio just as it stands, purchasing apparatus and all, and I wish you would come with me in my carriage and visit it. I should like an expert's opinion on the equipment."

Blair scowled at her with a ferocity entirely foreign to his kindly nature.

"Of course," said the girl, with drooping eyes, "I know how busy you are, and I should not think of asking so much of your time, except that I am prepared to pay you an expert's fee. Since taking up the attractive study of chemistry, I have been privileged to meet many men of science, and on being introduced to them as Mrs. Blair, they have almost invariably mentioned your name, and asked me whether I were acquainted with the great analytical chemist, Staunton Blair, generally adding that of course I wasn't, because you were not known to the public. You were much too good a man for *that*, they said. 'But by and by,' they added, 'the public will know him as we know him,' and all advised me that if I *could* get an opinion from you, I should secure it by all means. Therefore, Mr. Blair, I ask you, as a favour, to come with me."

"Certainly, certainly," rapidly answered Staunton Blair, quite unable to conceal his gratification at this well-placed flattery, so modestly and convincingly spoken.

When they reached the flat, even his dislike of the popular Professor Marling could not overcome Blair's admiration for the laboratory that celebrity had abandoned. Here were the things he had yearned for, too absent-minded to remember that he possessed the money wherewith to purchase them. He had not yet become acquainted with the fact that he was a rich man.

The two were standing together after the inspection, and she seemed pleased with his appreciation of their surroundings.

"I must stop talking of chemistry," she said, and now her eyes were downcast once more. "We've had enough of that. Do you mind if I speak of myself?"

"I should be delighted to hear how you are getting on," replied Blair fervently.

"I am sorry to say that the disaster you predicted has overtaken me."

"What was that? I don't recollect predicting any disaster."

"You did. Don't you remember on the



"She kissed his lips, and the colour returned to them."

Embankment you said, and I denied the possibility of it, that I might fall in love? Well, I have fallen in love."

"Great Heavens!" he muttered, aghast, and then again, "Great Heavens!"

She looked up at him. The colour had fled from his face, and his lips were pale. Then, with quite unnecessary vehemence, he cried—

"Confound Professor Marling!"

Now, this was abominably rude, when you consider that it was uttered in the presence of a lady, and, besides, was dragging in Velasquez, who had nothing to do with the case.

But the lady did not seem to be so much offended as she should have been.

She kissed his lips, and the colour returned to them.

# THE BANKER AND THE BREECHES BUOY.

By C. J. CUTCLIFFE HYNE.



HE puzzle is," said little Rakes, "where's the blooming Tyne?"

The three firemen were on top of the fiddley of the s.s. *Socotra* under the lee of her funnel, peering into the North Sea

gale ahead. A staysail set on the funnel bumped and bellied behind them. On her two stumpy masts, and derricks rigged as other masts, the steamer was fantastically adorned with other trysails, with awnings made into sails, and with tarred hatch-covers made into still other sails.

She was obviously broken down in her engine-room, and an object for salvage, and one would have thought that in the crowded North Sea it would not have been long before she was picked up (probably by an enthusiastic steam-trawler) and taken in tow. But no one had come near her, even though she bellowed lustily with her siren all the while she was dressing herself with the jury-masts and the makeshift canvas, and she had blown in for the English coast, making for the Tyne, the Tees, or Whitby as should befall.

"The wind's slewed round to the east'ard, and that means dead on shore. Also, I'll bet the old dog's travelling, by the handy way she steers. She's answering her helm a heap better than she did an hour ago, and that means better speed. Say, what's the beach like in this part of East England!"

"Beach?" said Clydebank. "There's probably a two-hundred-foot cliff to butt into when we get there, unless we happen to blunder on one of the few cracks where a river comes out. The Old Man told the Chief, just before we came up on to the fiddley here, that he hadn't a notion within forty mile what part of the coast we're heading for. The way she's drifted the last four days has upset all his reckoning, and not being an old North Sea skipper, he can't tell his whereabouts by the lead, like most of them do. And, of course, the old tub hasn't got such a thing as a North Sea Pilot

Book on board to give him pointers. The messroom steward heard all they said, and it was he that told me. Good Heavens! what are you laughing at?"

"I'm laughing," said Fairfield, "at the thought of that poor old duck of a passenger that came on board at Leith. If I'm not an absolute kid, the signs are plain to read. He's a defaulting bank cashier, for choice, and if he's not that, I'll swear he's skipped with somebody's boodle. You know the port we are bound for—or were till we broke down."

"Under no conditions is extradition allowed from Call-a-o.'" It was the Yankee who made the quotation.

"Precisely. Wonder who the lady is he's bolting with? The typewriter?"

"Better ask her, if you're curious. The knowledge may be useful when it comes to identifying corpses later on. Gee! You say the cliffs are two hundred feet high! Then if the Old Man piles her up against these, it'll be golden gates for all hands with this sea running."

"Or asbestos gates, according to record."

"It would be a rum go, us three ending up by getting drowned. I don't know what the percentage is of the steamboats' firemen who get drowned at sea, but it's mighty small. There are very few of us peg out half so decently." Thus Fairfield.

"Now you're getting sentimental," said the little Yankee, "or statistical, which is worse. There's your typewriter girl, by the way, just come out on deck. She'll solve her little problem, if she doesn't look spry, by being washed overboard."

"H'm," said Fairfield, "not bad-looking, either. The next green sea will probably make an introduction." He went to the edge of the fiddley and dropped lightly on the deck below. Fairfield was always something of a lady's man.

"Well," said Clydebank, "every man to his taste, and mine is not to be drowned on an empty belly. Let's get below. If we tell the Old Man's steward that we've been washed out of the firemen's forecabin, we may get some cabin grub, especially if we promise to break his head if he doesn't ante it up."



"Clydebank and little Rakes took the old gentleman under their charge, lugged him, half-drowned, along the streaming decks."

In the old transition days between sail and steam, each was auxiliary of the other, and the total failure of one of the pair still left a vessel under sufficient command. But in the modern steamer, yards are not, and masts have been whittled down to mere naked poles, on which to hang up a derrick and a couple of signal halliards. Moreover, the masts provided by the builders of the *Socotra* had been docked of a further fifty feet of their length to meet the requirements of the Manchester Ship Canal. So when deprived of her engines, she was a thing of pathetic helplessness. The amount of sail her captain had contrived to hang on her reminded one of an attempt to rig a railroad train with pocket handkerchiefs in the hopes of blowing it along the metals.

With the present gale pelting behind her, she had just got steerage way so long as she kept within half-a-dozen points of before the wind, and so her captain's choice of desti-

nation was small, even if he had happened to know of his whereabouts—which he did not. He was a man loaded with responsibility; a man poor, old, and burdened with a large family; a man who saw his professional future crumbling to pieces; in fact, a figure for whom I would ask your closest pity. But it is not my occasion here to write about men with official anxieties, and I must ask you to redirect your attention to a pair of wet, ragged, grimy firemen who were wolfing down a meal of commandeered cabin food, and garnishing it with pickles dug from their native bottle, and eaten simply from the fingers.

They fed and were filled, tried to squeeze the steward for a tot of grog and failed, and then retired to the solace of their pipes in the engine-room alley-way. They suffered from no regrets for their past, which was shady, had no anxiety for the future, which was, to say the least of it, uncertain. They



were filled with food of unaccustomed pleasantness, and having smoked, presently they slept. The responsibility for keeping the ship afloat and at sea was none of theirs.

Fairfield, on the other hand, had done without the meal. He had prevented the young woman passenger from being washed overboard, had tried to flirt, and found her irresponsive, and finally decided that a damsel who could be so overcome by trifles like seasickness and fear of death was not worthy of further attention. He had just reached this stage when the *Socotra* struck.

She hit the ground with a jar that strained every rivet in her fabric, and fractured a good many of them, and the next grey-back that followed sluiced her thoroughly from stern to stem. Also she slewed round broadside on to the seas. Presumably there was a shore near at hand, but dark had come down over the wet, grey sky, and the air, too, was full of spindrift, and they could not catch even the loom of land.

Rockets were ready, and these climbed from the upper bridge one after another up out of sight into the night, and in the meanwhile the seas, with a monotonous regularity, lifted the *Socotra* and let her bang back upon the sand. She gave forth a noise like a boiler factory, which even to the professional ear was extremely alarming, but she did not visibly break up. A modern steel ship with double bottom can put up with a terrific amount of battering about before she dissolves very much into her primitive plates. But in the meanwhile she grew more and more uncomfortable to live on. All the North Sea (so it seemed) kept churning over her decks in one continuous cascade. Everything movable floated away at once, and the immovables soon began to follow them. Derrick booms got adrift, threshed about, smashed bulwarks, then parted their goose-necks and left for the beach; hatch covers peeled away, hatches followed, and into the gaps which remained the seas poured a steady torrent; the upper bridge came unshipped, and dangled overboard by one incredibly twisted pair of stanchions; the very anchors were uprooted from their berths on the fore-castle head.

Of course, the boats were spirited away out of the davits at a very early stage of the proceedings, and at the end of an hour the steamer was stripped pretty well to the bare iron. She was full of water and looked very like a half-tide rock, which showed only now and then through the fierce run of seas, and above it still grew her two stark masts, each

carrying half the ship's company uncomfortably perched on ratlines. Overhead the wet night was black dark, but underneath them the water contained enough phosphorescence to make the sea crests visible.

Before they took to the masts, the old man passenger had put in an appearance from below, and him Fairfield put in charge of his two friends. "He's an absconding bank manager, for a thousand," said Fairfield, "and if he gets ashore alive, they'll put him in the gaol he's been running from. It would be much more charitable to leave him to drown. But I owe that typewriter girl he's eloping with a bad turn. She's such an infernal bore. So we'll take the old swindler ashore alive—that is, if the very unlikely happens, and we get there ourselves."

So, on no warmer recommendation, Clydebank and little Rakes took the old gentleman under their charge, lugged him, half-drowned, along the streaming decks, and hauled him, a poor, inert figure of humanity, up the whipping shrouds. They noted that Fairfield himself salvaged the uninteresting typewriter, but there was nothing unusual about that. Fairfield was always a lady's man, and if he could not get them amusing, he took what there was.

The time was early autumn, but the wind was out of the East and North, and that, in the North Sea, meant a winter temperature. The gale whistled through the wet clothes, and teeth chattered and locked. The ill-clad crew, many of them still bilious from a shore debauch, were quickly nipped by exhaustion, and those who looked like toppling off were seized to the rigging by their mates. Two, a coal-trimmer and the messroom steward, died like this, and hung like men crucified; and the rest, in threes and fours, huddled together as tightly as might be for warmth. Our three firemen cuddled themselves tightly round the typewriter and the absconder; not because Rakes and Clydebank had any wish that way, but because Fairfield said it was to be done. And so the crew of the *Socotra* hung dead, half-dead, and alive till daylight.

Then the light showed them a fifty-foot cliff fifty yards away, on the crest of which was a naval person, whom they understood to be a coastguard. He, with a pocket-handkerchief, sent them a long wig-wag message in Morse code which not a soul of them understood, and they cursed his antics with virulence whilst they endured. When at last he took himself off, they quite understood he had gone for the rocket apparatus, and sent up variously worded petitions to



"In the meanwhile the gale blew with unabated force, and the *Socotra* went on with her breaking up."

Heaven that he would not be long. And in the meanwhile the gale blew with unabated force, and the *Socotra* went on with her breaking up.

"I think," said little Rakes at this point, "that Grandpa is quite dead. Anyway, I want a spell of blanket, and I don't see why he shouldn't take a turn at outside berth." But Fairfield laughed and said "No," and the Yankee cursed and continued to hang on where he was and shelter the old man from the whipping spray. The scene around them was sufficiently terrific, to have daunted most folk, but the three firemen were too reckless for the ordinary decencies. They laughed and bawled jokes at one another the whole time they hung there in the rigging. As Clydebank said, it cost nothing to play the fool, and it was a sight warmer to laugh than to grieve.

In due time the coastguard returned; with him a rocket-cart and a mob of wind-whipped followers. They rigged their triangle and shot their line seaward. The desperate men in the rigging betted on the result. Five times the rocket swerved and went astray, and the line had to be tediously hauled in, and rearranged zigzag in the box. The sixth time it landed over the steamer's brine-washed smoke-stack, and by an effort was retrieved. A warp was dragged out and made fast, the hauling-lines were rove, and presently the breeches-buoy came hopping out under the travelling-block. And thereafter the castaways proceeded to the cliff-head in twos, those that had suffered least from the exposure escorting those whom the cold had nipped more cruelly.

A parson in ragged oilskins, with a sou'-wester tied down under his chin, seemed to be conducting matters ashore, and because he had a bottle of whisky in one hand, and a tin pannikin in the other, the three firemen made for him with one intent. They were some of the last to come off the wreck.

"Ah!" said his reverence, "I've saved a mugful each for you. I hear you're the pluckiest fellows on board."

"We are, sir, yes," said Fairfield, "if that means it will run to another tot."

"I'm afraid you've finished the bottle, and that's the last I have. But if you'll come to the Vicarage, I'll do my best to warm you up there. You'll meet Mr. Askew there, and he wants to thank you—and I imagine his thanks will be substantial."

"Is that the banker?"

"Banker! What do you mean? He's the great astronomer-fellow. He's the man the Royal Astronomical Society of Scotland have sent out to some place near Valparaiso to observe the eclipse of the sun."

"Gee!" said little Rakes, and laughed at Fairfield.

"And the lady, sir?" asked Fairfield. "She told me she was his typewriter."

"Well, perhaps she is. But she's his daughter also. And she probably knows more about astronomy than any other woman living."

"Which accounts," said Fairfield glumly, as the three at the parson's heels battled through the gale to the Vicarage, "which accounts for her being so awfully dull. Well, one meets all sorts at sea."

## PERSEVERANCE.

**T**HE insistent sea attacks the shore,  
And though repulsed through every age  
It hurls its legions evermore  
With ardour nothing can assuage.

O soul of mine, be as the sea:  
And though thou art often driven back,  
Renew, renew incessantly  
The phalanx of thy first attack.

WALLACE BERTRAM NICHOLS.

# ENGLAND'S STORY IN PORTRAIT & PICTURE.

## I. FROM LEGENDARY TIMES TO THE REIGN OF ETHELBERT, KING OF KENT.

IN the study of history, Freeman insisted, we must cast away all distinctions of "ancient" and "modern," of "dead" and "living," and must boldly grapple with the great fact of that history's unity.

He explains the reason

of this charge as being

that "as man is the

same in all ages,

the history of

man is one in

all ages. No

language, no

period of

history, can

be under-

stood in its

ful ness,

none can be

clothed in its

highest

interest and

its highest

profit, if it

be looked at

wholly in

itself, with-

outreference

to its bear-

ing on those

other lan-

guages, those

other periods

of history,

which, join

with it to

make up the

great whole

of human, or

at least, of

Aryan and

European,

being."

Certain

conditions

of progress

seem, in-

deed, in all

nations, to have followed the same course.

First came language; then, in succession,

clothing, housing, the bending to human

use of the force of heat and those pro-

ducts of Nature by which are fashioned imple-  
ments of war and husbandry, the domesti-  
cation of animals, the arts of agriculture, of  
government, of beauty, and, lastly,  
of writing. By this last-named

art the generation that

reached to it found

means of handing

down messages of

its well or ill

being to genera-

tions to come.

The his-

stories of

countries are

embedded in

their writ-

ings, but the

sharp pens

of historians

have pricked

the facts of

these so

often, and,

on occasion,

so clumsily,

that the

designs vary,

we cannot

doubt,

greatly from

the origi-

nals, to

assume in

time singu-

lar shapes,

sometimes

of dignity,

sometimes

of beauty,

sometimes

of burlesque.

All the more

interesting,

therefore, is

the work of

the painter

to whom, as

Horace says,

has been ceded the right to dare anything his  
fancy suggests, when he lends to us his genius,  
that, by its aid, we may the better envision  
the leading events of our country's history.



PHOENICIANS TRADING ON THE COAST OF CORNWALL.

*From the painting by Lord Leighton at the Royal Exchange. Reproduced by permission of the Gresham Committee and of the Leighton House Trustees.*



LEAR DIVIDING HIS KINGDOM—"CORDELIA'S PORTION." BY FORD MADDOX BROWN.

*From the monochrome in the collection of Mr. Francis, reproduced from a photograph by F. Hallyer, Pembroke Square, W.*

We have, of course, no actual contemporary pictures of the earliest period of our nation's evolution, no actual portraits of our country's earliest inhabitants—

Cities have been and vanished ; faces have sunk,  
Heaped into shapeless ruin ; sands o'erspread  
Fields that were Edens ; millions, too, have shrunk  
To a few starving hundreds, who have fled  
From off the page of being . . .

but by the aid of the imagination of modern painters we are seemingly enabled to invade the past, which is alive and stirring with scenes of interest, and to behold, in the mind's eye, many momentous occasions of "what has been."

One of the first landmarks in our country's history is illustrated by Lord Leighton's mural painting of Phœnician merchants trading with the ancient Britons on the Cornish coast, an event which links Britain with Bible history. That most Homeric of historians, Herodotus, in the fifth century B.C., wrote of two islands, beyond the Pillars of Hercules, which he described as very large, Albion and Ierne, called the Britannie, situated beyond the Celtæ, and on the authority of the "Oxford" Bible we learn that tin was one of the imports of Egypt from Spain, through Phœnicians, who also obtained it (as Herodotus and Strabo tell us) from Britain.

It is interesting to linger over this picture of Lord Leighton's, for when the Phœnicians were trading on our coasts, bartering for tin ornaments of dress, implements of husbandry, household utensils, baubles and gew-gaws, the Prophet Ezekiel was writing: "Tarshish (possibly Spain) was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of all kind of riches ; with silver, iron, tin and lead, they (*i.e.*, the Phœnicians) traded in thy fairs.

"When thy wares went forth out of the seas, thou filledst many people ; thou didst enrich the kings of the earth with the multitude of thy riches and of thy merchandise.

"Fine linen with brodered work from

Egypt was that which thou spreadest forth to be thy sail ; blue and purple from the isles of Elishah was that which covered thee."

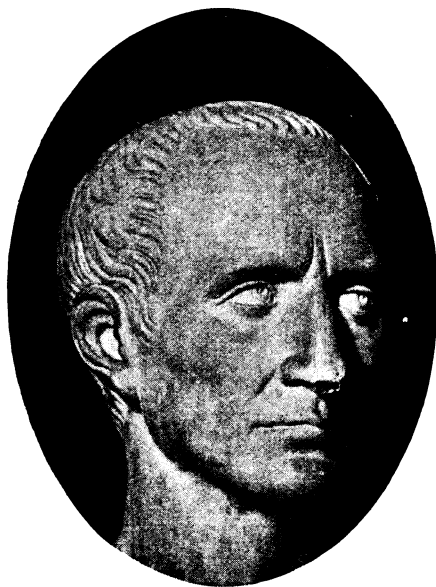
The merchandise that the Phœnicians brought to England may well have enthralled the hearts of our rough ancestors, for the beautifully coloured garments of Sidon, celebrated in the Homeric period, were their invention, and the Tyrian purple, from light to dark and almost every shade between, was one of the wonders of antiquity.

Quite recently it has been suggested that it is wrong to suppose that the Phœnicians drew tin as early as the fifth century B.C. from the rich deposits of that ore in Cornwall, and that the Cassiterides were, as was for so long

assumed, the Scilly Islands, for, although adventurous Carthaginian mariners are known to have established a trade in tin with them, as well as with Spain and Gaul, to-day's view of the geographical position of the Cassiterides is that they lie off the north-west coast of the Spanish Peninsula.

Facts have, here and there, all historians allow, been caught in the web of imagination, and the general dust of time has harmonised the whole so as to make it difficult to distinguish where imagination begins and actual fact ends ; but if we are to doubt the tales of Herodotus, told in such happy turns of

phrase, we have at least authentic record that Pythias, a Greek mathematician, the Humboldt of antiquity, sailed, 300 years B.C., in command of an expedition of which the object was to establish trade in those provinces which lay beyond Southern Gaul. He skirted the shores of Britain, and if Charles Elton, in his "Origins of English History," is right in his conclusion that Pythias was the founder of that commerce in tin which was established between England and Marseilles (a Greek colony known, at that time, as Massilia), then Lord Leighton's picture stands as a record of a trade which, if not Biblical in its interest, is still classical.



JULIUS CÆSAR.

*From the bust in the British Museum.*



In the time that lies between the coming of the Phœnicians to our shores and the landing of Julius Cæsar, while the Jews fell under the rule of no less than four different dynasties—that of Persia, of Greece, of the Asmonœans, of the Idumean Antipater and Herod—and while other contemporary events outside our land embraced the era of Alexander the Great, the end of the Persian Empire, the three Punic Wars, the fall of Carthage and the establishment of the Triumvirate, Britain was entering into a state of more or less civilisation. We see her by the help of Shakespeare under the rule of Lear, about the year 70 B.C., and Ford Madox Brown and Edwin Abbey have given us admirable pictures of this mythical period of history.

at Dover, he was fearful of landing, as the Dover heights were covered with armed men, and it was not till the evening of that day that, vigorously opposed by the natives, he effected a landing at Deal, eight miles farther down the coast. Even then he found himself amongst so hostile a multitude, and so entirely at the mercy of the weather, that, on this first venture to our shores, he “gladly accepted an illusory promise of submission from a few of the natives, and hastened back with his army to Gaul after a short absence of three weeks.” But he magnified his prowess into the conquest of a new world. The following year, with a fleet of eight hundred ships, Cæsar again crossed the Channel, and after warfare of many months with most



“THE LANDING OF JULIUS CÆSAR IN ENGLAND.” BY E. BURNEY.

The definite story of Britain, however, must be said to begin with the landing of Cæsar’s legions, in the fifty-fifth year before the Christian era, even although it was not made an actual kingdom until Alfred succeeded in ejecting the Danes from it. At the time of Cæsar’s invasion the population of the country was split up into about forty tribes, some of whom had presumably united themselves and gone to the aid of the Gauls, when they were fighting against him for their independence, and his invasion of our land is attributed to his intention to punish so audacious a people, although in his “Commentaries” he represents this invasion as undertaken for the purposes of discovery.

Julius Cæsar had his ships brought from Cape Gris Nez with two legions on board, but on reaching the white coasts of Albion,

of the tribes, returned again to Gaul to celebrate imaginary victories, as the conqueror of Britain, although, in reality, he had not managed to secure one foot of British ground.

For the next ninety-seven years the Britons were left untroubled by Roman invasion, the attention of the Romans being too actively employed at home to wander to foreign conquests. Then Claudius, instigated by Bericus, whom domestic feuds had ostracised from Britain, commanded Plautius to transport four legions, with their German auxiliaries, into Britain. The Emperor himself commanded the legion which penetrated to Colchester, and there he received the submission of the Britons in the vicinity.

As illustration of this period we have the cartoon by G. F. Watts of “Caractacus Led



"CARACTACUS LED IN TRIUMPH THROUGH ROME." BY G. F. WATTS, R.A.

in Triumph through Rome." After fighting against the Roman legions for nine years, this gallant chief of the tribe known as the Catuvellauni, was betrayed to his enemies by his kinswoman, Cartismandua, queen of the tribe of the Brigantes. He was sent a prisoner to Rome, where his fame "had already crossed the seas; and the natives of Italy were anxious to behold the man who for nine years had braved the power of Rome. As he passed through the imperial city, he expressed his surprise that men who possessed such palaces at home should deem it worth their while to fight for the wretched hovels of Britain. Claudius, to his own

Ostorius Scapula succeeded Plautius, and his successor was Didius Gallus, and after him came Veranius, whose early death made way for Suetonius Paulinus, during whose occupation occurred the revolt of Boadicea. The defeat of this rising, although it did not put an end to war, proclaimed the ascendancy of Roman rule; but the task of tranquillising the conquered part of the island, and the mutinous spirit prevailing in the army, prevented both Suetonius and his successors in the governorship from making any attempt to subjugate the still independent portions of the country; and it was not until 84 A.D. that any success occurred in this direction,



"BOADICEA HARANGUING THE ICENI." BY H. C. SELOUS.

honour, received him graciously, restored him to liberty, and, if we may credit Tacitus, invested him with princely authority over a portion of conquered Britain. The event was celebrated at Rome with extraordinary joy."

After the taking of Caractacus there were still many battles to be fought on these shores and much determined resistance to be overcome. Plautius succeeded Claudius as governor of the district east of the Thames, and Vespasian, afterwards invested with the imperial purple, fought no less than thirty battles in the south and west, probably in a district now represented by Wiltshire, Hampshire, and Dorsetshire.

when Agricola defeated, though he did not subdue, the northern provinces.

Thirty years after Agricola's departure the state of Britain, as a Roman province, had become so precarious as to require, in 120 A.D., the presence of the Emperor Hadrian, who managed to establish a tranquillity that was repeatedly disturbed during the reign of his successor, Antoninus.

With varying fortunes under Severus, Aurelian, Diocletian, Constantius, Constantine, and Maximus, the Britons rebelled and yielded, and were again in combined and separate revolt, until 449 A.D., when, determined to eject an authority unable to afford

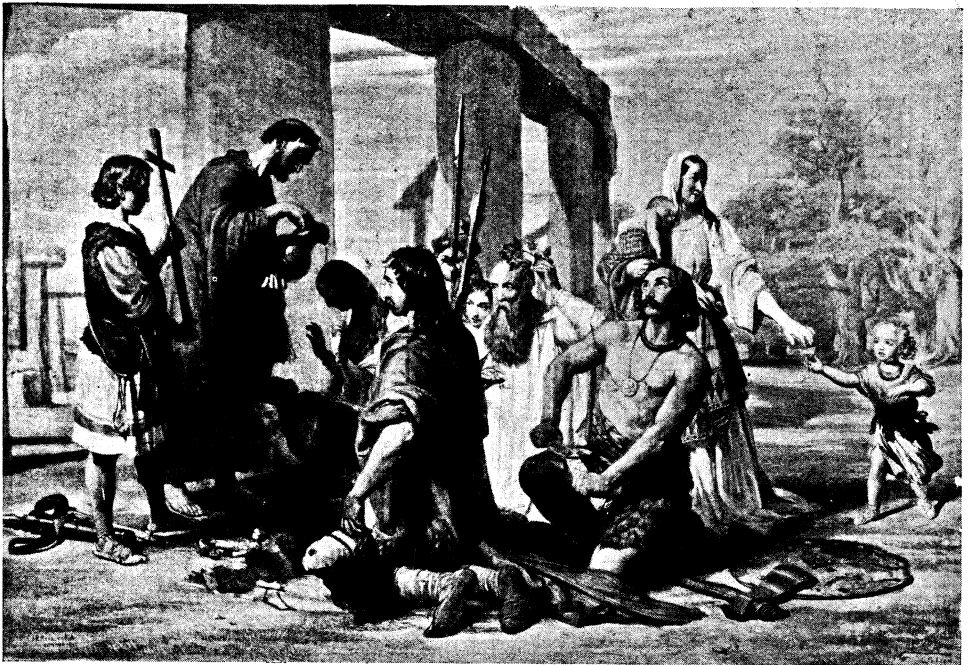


"JOSEPH OF ARIMATHÆA CONVERTING THE BRITONS." BY EDMUND THOMAS PARRIN.

them protective peace against other foreign incursions, they deposed the Roman magistrates and proclaimed their own independence—a statement which rests on the authority of Zosimus, the Greek historian. Mommsen says: "It was not Britain that gave up Rome, but Rome that gave up Britain;" but whatever the cause, the Emperor, Honorius, in A.D. 410, finally renounced his sovereignty over the island.

As illustrations of these years of Roman occupation we have the fresco of Ford Madox Brown of "The Building of the Roman Fort at Mancunium (Manchester)"; the fresco of "The Building of the Roman Wall," by William

There is a picture by J. R. Herbert, entitled "The First Preaching of Christianity in Britain, in A.D. 60," and illustrating the same date, which is coincident with the revolt of Boadicea, we have Holman Hunt's picture of "A Converted British Family Sheltering a Christian Missionary from the Persecution of the Druids," but, as the *Historians' History* says: "At a distance of so many ages it is impossible to discover by whom Christianity was first preached in the island. Some writers have ascribed that province to St. Peter; others have preferred the rival claim of St. Paul, but both opinions, improbable as they are in

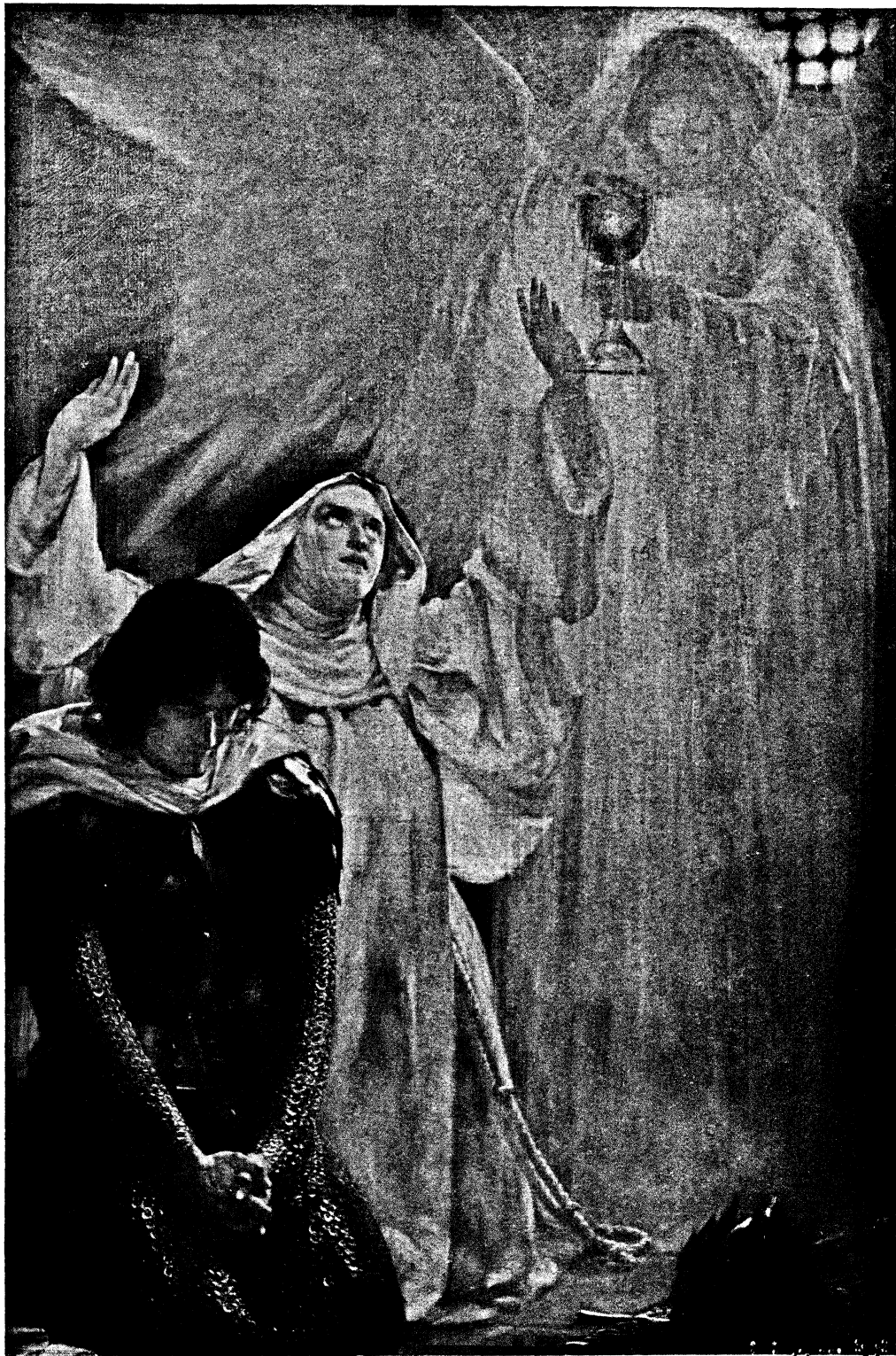


"THE FIRST PREACHING OF CHRISTIANITY IN BRITAIN." BY J. R. HERBERT, R.A.

Bell Scott; old prints of traditional scenes in the lives of the ancient Britons, and pictures of "Boadicea Haranguing her Troops." Shakespeare's "Cymbeline" somewhat vaguely illustrates Roman influences in Britain, and several scenes of that play have inspired a number of artists. There is also a large group of pictures which deal with the early conversion of the Druids and the different island tribes to Christianity, some of which connect England's history with the awe-inspiring events of the New Testament, just as Lord Leighton's picture of the Phœnicians trading on the coasts of Cornwall links us with the Old.

themselves, rest on the most slender evidence, on testimonies which are many of them irrelevant, all ambiguous and unsatisfactory." But when History halts, Romance takes her place, and one of the most beautiful romances of Christianity has its beginning in the year of our Lord 33, and its end in that most obscure period of legend, the Arthurian golden age. An old tradition maintains that Joseph of Arimathæa brought the Gospel to Britain. In the book of Apocryphal writings of Nicodemus we read: "And a man named Joseph, a councillor from the City of Arimathæa, who also waited for the Kingdom of God, went to Pilate and begged the body





"THE VISION OF SIR PERCIVALE'S SISTER." BY SIGISMUND GOETZE.

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"HOW FOUR QUEENS FOUND SIR LANCELOT SLEEPING." BY W. FRANK CALDERON.

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of Jesus." "Pilate," we learn elsewhere, "allowed Joseph to take down the body of Christ from the Cross, and gave to him also *son vaisseul*, by which was evidently meant the chalice of His passion or the cup used at the Last Supper . . . In that cup Joseph collected the precious blood of his Saviour; and was directed by the voice of Jesus speaking from the *vaisseul* (Grael) to establish a test of righteousness and sin by means of the Holy Blood. . . . Joseph, with a following of his kinsmen, came to the far west to the vale of

has little to identify him with the Arthur who came to be regarded as the founder of the harmonious hierarchy of chivalry, who came into being as a national hero by means of the minstrels of the twelfth century, and became full grown in the compilation known as the "*Morte d'Arthur*" of the fourteenth century. What wonder that themes which fired to enthusiasm writers who for their expression are confined to the terms of black and white, should have proved irresistible to painters who have the use of



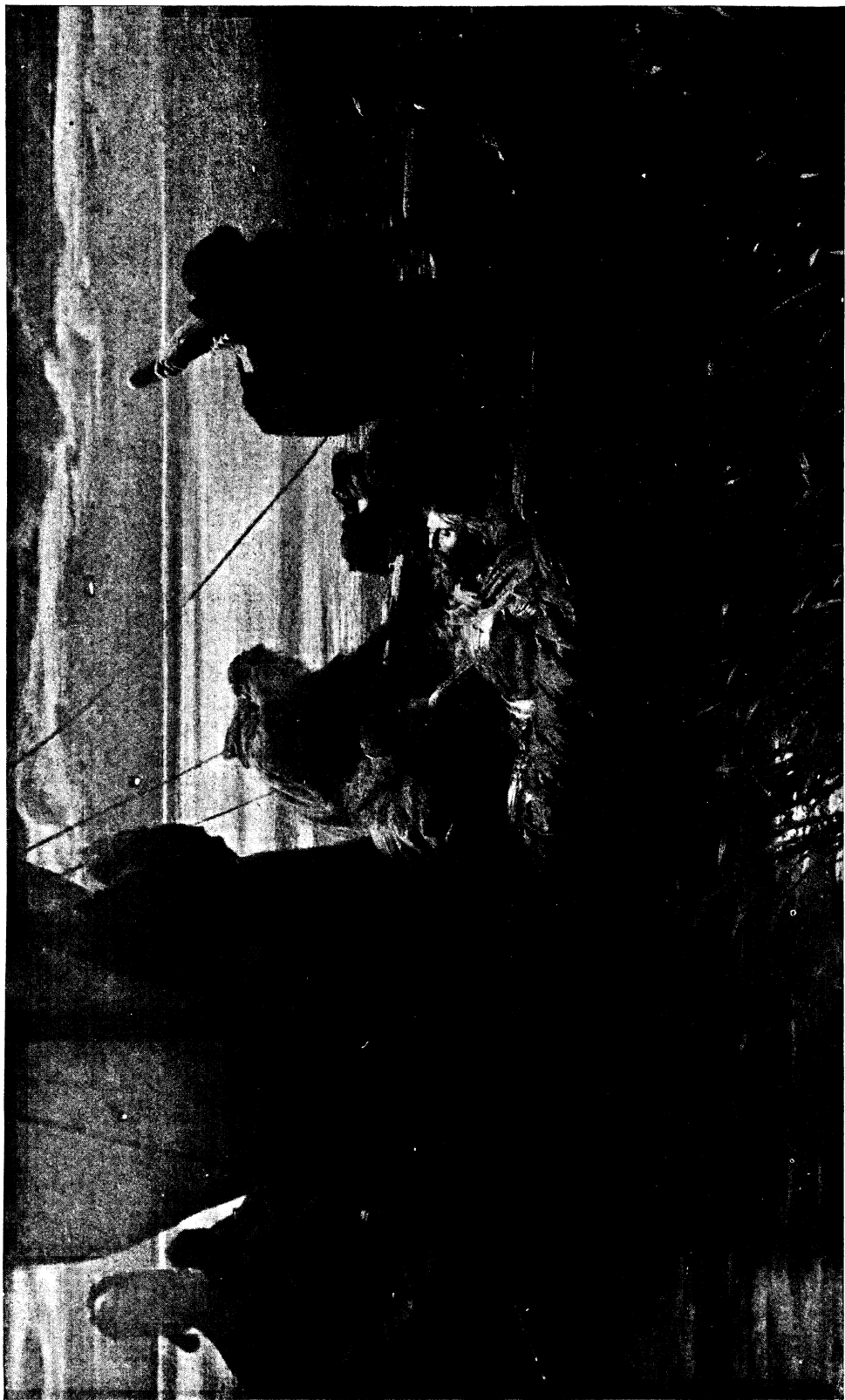
"HOW CERTAIN AGED AMBASSADORS OF ROME CAME TO KING ARTHUR, TO DEMAND TRUAGE FROM BRITAIN." BY HERBERT A. BONE.

Avalon or Avelon." Such is the picturesque legend which romance has subtly elaborated ;

But then the times  
Grew to such evil that the holy cup  
Was caught away to Heaven, and disappear'd.

This story of Joseph of Arimathea is closely associated with the Arthurian legend, and although in an historical article it is somewhat of an anachronism to bracket them with recorded facts, they are included naturally in that picturesque vision with which we regard bygone events. The real Arthur, the fifth century leader of the Celtic tribes of the west of England against the Saxons,

the molten jewels of their palette, and that artists such as Rossetti, Burne-Jones, G. F. Watts, William Dyce, Gustave Doré, and many another have fallen under the influence of their glamour? For our present gallery we have chosen certain of the more recent and therefore less familiar pictures inspired by themes from the Arthurian story, among them Mr. W. Frank Calderon's gay rendering of the scene in the third chapter of the sixth book of the "*Morte d'Arthur*," which tells how the four queens found Sir Lancelot asleep under an apple tree,



"THE PASSING OF ARTHUR." BY FRANK DICKSEE, R.A.

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The more solemn theme of Mr. Sigismund Goetze is that of the vision of the Holy Grail granted to the nun who was sister to Sir Percivale, one of the most chivalrous knights of Arthur's Court, and this is the scene exquisitely described by Tennyson :—

And "O my brother Percival," she said,  
"Sweet brother, I have seen the Holy Grail:  
For, waked at dead of night, I heard a sound  
As of a silver horn from o'er the hills.

Stream'd thro' my cell a cold and silver beam,  
And down the long beam stole the Holy Grail,  
Rose-red with beatings in it, as if alive,  
Till all the white wall of my cell were dyed

Later stories tell that Vortigern, the most powerful British chief, asked the help of the German tribes, the Jutes, the Saxons, and the Angles to aid him against the incursions of the Picts and Scots, and that these, under the command of Hengist and Horsa, in A.D. 449, landed on the isle of Thanet, the first of that tribe of Saxons which was, for six hundred years, to dominate Britain.

In A.D. 477, more Saxons under a chief named Ella conquered the British shore west of Kent. The advent of Ella was followed by that of Cerdic, another Saxon chieftain



"ST. AUGUSTINE PREACHING TO ETHELBERT AND BERTHA." BY JOHN CALCOTT HOUSLEY.

With rosy colours leaping on the wall;  
And then the music faded, and the Grail  
Past, and the beam decay'd, and from the walls  
The rosy quiverings died into the night.

Just as, in the history of the world, the records of older civilisations, such as those of Chaldea, Assyria, and Egypt, are, in this twentieth century, the most complete, so, in the history of our own land, are the early days of Roman occupation more clear to us than those which immediately followed upon them.

We have but poor records of that time of unrest and disturbance which succeeded the retirement of the Romans from our shores.

and ancestor of our long line of Anglo-Saxon kings, who established his kingdom in Wessex; and in about A.D. 500 there were, in this island, no less than eight independent kingdoms under Saxon rule. To Ethelbert, king of Kent, in A.D. 568, falls the onus of having disturbed the harmonies of these kingdoms; but he was a ruler of some enlightenment and, before his death, published that code of laws for the administration of justice which Alfred was the first fully to enforce. But the ascendancy of Ethelbert and the impulse given to Christianity under his rule must supply the opening pictures for our next article.

# DRY GOODS.

BY FLORA ANNIE STEEL.



R. BLOOKER, sir," said the head clerk severely, "no one whose chest measurement is under thirty-two inches has any right to beat time to 'Rule, Britannia!' even when it is played

by a German band in the street."

A small man, whose desk stood nearest the office window, against which a City fog lay like yellow cotton-wool, blushed, apologised incoherently, and returned to fair general averages.

The other clerks tittered, since this was a recurring criticism. For though Alexander Blooker's chest measurement made active patriotism impossible, the heart within it was full of that sentiment. This was unmistakable when he boomed forth solid songs of the past, such as "The Death of Nelson" and "The Soldier's Tear" in his big, solid, bass voice; the more modern ditties about "beggars" and "gurls" and "kids" and "khaki" being, he assured his club, "unsuitable to his organ." And Alexander Blooker was very proud of his organ.

*"Never, never, never will be slaves!"*

Quite unconsciously his dutiful pen punctuated each quaver and semi-quaver, though in his heart of hearts he knew that he himself had been a slave all his life. First to an old aunt who had lately died full of self-satisfaction because she had left him fifty pounds out of the money she had saved from the earnings he had brought home to her all his working life; and secondly to the head clerk, Mr. Mossop. Such a kind, good——

"Blooker, please!" chanted the office boy, showing round the glass screen.

It was the voice of Fate. Wondering vaguely whether this unusual call to the innermost holy of holies, "Our Firm," presaged dismissal—possibly for punctuating patriotism—he went meekly.

And he returned as he went, to sit down solidly once more to fair general averages. The other clerks waited for a remark, but

none came; so the pens scraped and scraped until time was up.

Then, when the office was empty save for himself and Alexander, Mr. Mossop, the head clerk, went over to the latter's desk.

"We can finish that for you, Mr. Blooker," he said; "you have much to do."

"Thank you, sir," came the solemn reply, "I am much obliged to you, sir, but I would rather complete it myself, sir, before going to——" Then decorum gave way—"Mr. Mossop, sir," he continued wildly, "am I on my 'ead or on my 'eels? I can't believe it—and it is all your doing, sir. I feel sure 'Our Firm' wouldn't never have done it if you hadn't spoken for me, and—and—I don't know whether I am on my 'ead or my 'eels!'"

As a rule, Alexander Blooker struggled successfully with the accent of Cockaigne, but in times of stress, and especially when using certain set phrases, he adhered to it as if he felt it added forcefulness of expression.

There was a suspicion of a tear in his pale blue eye, and Mr. Mossop felt inclined to brace him up by telling him the truth—namely, that "Our Firm" contemplated in the near future closing the Distant Dépôt to the charge of which he had been appointed. Briefly, it did not pay: Germany had got at the markets in the way that Germany has, when competition is old-fashioned. But Alexander Blooker's face came up from the ledger over which it had bent itself for a moment with an expression on it that startled Mr. Mossop out of contemptuous compassion.

"I am going to run this job on my own, sir," he began eagerly, "I'm going to work it on Imperial lines——"

"Hm—we are not at the debating club, Mr. Blooker," interrupted the head clerk; but Alexander was beyond recall; his voice took on the blatant tone of the public speaker.

"Shrinkage in trade follows shortage in piece goods, and our piece goods *is* short. Germany's ain't. I don't say that 'Our Firm' is as bad as most, but there's a cool quarter yard out of the forty for rubbage border and all that. Besides, mind you, some of 'em goes so far as *three-quarters*!—





"His remonstrances, however, were in vain."

*a cool—three-quarters !*—and why not ? If you t'ike a h'inch, why not t'ike a h'ell !"

This was apparently quite conclusive, for the head clerk hastily changed the subject to the necessary preparations. But two days could be allowed, as the Distant Dépôt lay up a river that was only navigable for six months in the year ; and four of these were already overpast. It was rather a rush, but the present occupant of the post had unexpectedly accepted the agency of a liquor shop ; and the half-yearly market must not find "Our Firm" without a representative. So the first mail—it was a journey of six or

seven weeks—must be the one. If any money was wanted——

"Thank you, sir," replied Alexander Blooker, "the fifty pounds of my own that my aunt left me will do for the present. By and by, perhaps——"

He looked mysterious, but he said no more to anyone ; unless he whispered something to the glass case illustrating cotton manufactures in the Imperial Institute, which had always had an especial fascination for him. Despite his hurry, he was looking at the peculiarly broad borders of a pile of piece goods and muttering under his breath : "If



you t'ike a h'inch, you may as well t'ike a h'ell," when a man of gold lace and buttons found him, after closing time, and hustled him by corridors of Imperial pickle-bottles into the Sahara of Exhibition Road.

Within two months he was—to use his own expression—"taking down the shutters" in a very different desert. For the "Distant Depôt" lay at the "Back o' Beyont." Whereabouts in the World-Circle, matters nothing. Briefly it was one of those advancing tentacles of civilisation boasting the Mission House, the Dry Goods Store or two, and the Whisky Shop, which, carry, between them, civilisation to the aboriginal. Beyond it lay desolation, except for a single telegraph wire which spanned the void towards the west, instead of following the tortuous curves of the river (now sinking into sandbanks), which after a long course south-eastward eventually found itself at the same goal—the seaboard. There was no town to speak of; only a cluster of leaf-huts, besides the Mission House and Chapel, the two Stores and the Liquor Shop. And these were so close clustered that to Alexander Blooker, when he rose to look out over his new world on the morning after his arrival, it seemed as if the bell which was being rung from the Chapel was a general invitation to pray, and buy, and drink.

But it was a pretty little place. A real oasis in the surrounding desert of sands, and almost bewilderingly green amidst thickets of banana trees.

A tall, fat man showed in the verandah of the opposition.

"*Guten Morgen, mein Freund,*" he called, with superb indifference. "I gif you welcome."

That was doubtless Franz Braun, the German rival, and Alexander Blooker hated him at sight; but he kept his dignity.

"The same to you, sir," he replied stiffly. "I trust trade is good."

"It is goot for me," remarked Franz Braun with an air for which Alexander Blooker could have kicked him. That being impossible, owing to their relative sizes, the little man relieved his bellicose feelings by beginning on "Twas in Trafalgar Bay." It still had for him the charm of novelty to be able to beat time when and where he chose.

"*Mein Gott!*" shouted Franz Braun excitedly, over the way. "*Was für eine Stimme! Wunderbar!*"

It was the voice that did it. But for it the armed neutrality of the past between the rival firms might have remained in the

future; as it was, an hour afterwards Alexander Blooker was politely, but steadily, refusing to sing a second to the "*Wacht am Rhein,*" although Franz Braun (who had an equally good high tenor, after the fashion of tall, burly men), wept on his shoulder and called him "*Brüderlein.*"

"You must to the pastor-house this evening," sighed the big creature at last. "Fräulein Anna, who is to the Pastor Schmidt daughter, will make you sing. She is my *Verlobte*. I will to her be married, but she will make *you* sing."

Nevertheless, neither her yellow hair nor her blue eyes beguiled Alexander Blooker from his fixed determination; but they sang together for half the night, and the memory of Fräulein Anna's soaring soprano, as the notes of "Oh! for the wings of a dove," floated into the hot air, was with him as, despite the lateness of the hour, he set all in readiness for the morrow. Since on the next day's doings much depended; for it was the yearly market-day, on which all the native traders from far and near came to buy goods. Alexander Blooker, in fact, had hurried his *doongah* up the sinking river, so as to reach the Distant Depôt in time for it. His last task was the undoing of one of the small bales which throughout their journey had been the objects of his special care.

"If you t'ike a h'inch, you may as well t'ike a h'ell," he murmured, as he cut the packing-threads by the dim light—for he had refused to use the "Made in Germany" lamp of his predecessor. Then, with a sigh of satisfaction, he held up the top one of the hard-pressed pile of printed cotton handkerchiefs.

"That ought to fetch 'em," he said admiringly. Certainly it might have "fetched" anything and everything. To use heraldic terms, the field of the kerchief was *gules*, *argent*, and *azure*, arranged in *saltire*—otherwise a Union Jack. An *escutcheon of pretence* bore the Queen's head *regardant*, while *quarterly*, *en surtout*, were—On the first, *gules*, three lions *passant*, *or*, for England. On the second, *or*, a lion *rampant* within a double *treasure flory*, *counter flory*, *gules*, for Scotland. On the third, *azure*, a harp *or*, stringed *argent*, for Ireland. On the fourth? Well!—Why the fourth field should have been charged with specimens from a pack of cards, and a frothing pot of beer, Alexander Blooker did not know. It was a blot on the *scutcheon*, no doubt; but two days had not sufficed for the printing of a special design, and this was the best he

had been able to find. Besides, in a measure, it was true. There was no blinking the fact that even British civilisation was apt to bring gambling and drinking with it.

The next day, the whole place was full up with native traders and natives generally. The first sight of them made Alexander Blooker wonder why they were so eager for piece goods, considering how little of them they wore! But then he had hardly realised that beyond that northerly desert lay a huge tract of densely populated, almost unknown land.

Trade was brisk over the way at Franz Braun's store. The cheap German muslins, guaranteed full length and packed in convenient, carriageable size, went off like smoke; and it was not until the best lots had gone that a trader thought it worth while to give a perfunctory glance at Alexander Blooker's consignments. Then his eye fell instantly on the heraldic handkerchiefs.

"Sell—how much?" he asked.

Alexander Blooker shook his head. "They are not for sale, sir," he replied loftily. "They are a gift. An Imperial gift from Her Gracious Majesty the Queen of England. Everyone as buys forty yards of English stuff has one of them given in—free, gratis, and for nothin'. Him as buys two, has three; and so on—much the same as parcel post rates."

It took two interpreters to bring home this admixture of patriotism and progressive bribery to the limited brains of purchasers, but when it did find its way into their understanding the effect was marvellous. Before the sun set Alexander Blooker had to conceal his last bale of handkerchiefs against the year which must elapse before he could get a new supply.

"So! *mein Freund*," said Franz Braun, with a good-natured laugh. "It is well; but it is not trade!"

"It will be trade," replied little Alexander stoutly. "I am going to work this job on Imperial lines."

It grew to be a joke in this Distant Dépôt, as it had been in the City office, where the yellow fog lay on the windows like cotton wool; but here Mr. Blooker had liberty to beat time to anything he choose. And it was surprising how the natives took to him. He must have spent a good deal of his fifty pounds on the purchase of medicines, for his morning dispensary soon outrivalled Pastor Schmidt's, who, in truth, was growing a bit old for the work. He had lost his wife of late years, his daughter was betrothed to

Franz Braun (who had a promise of a post elsewhere), and the hearts of all three held hope of change in the near future which hindered much enthusiasm in the present. Not that there had ever been much of it in their lives; even the old missionary had gone on his way coolly, if conscientiously.

Alexander Blooker, on the contrary, was always at fever heat. He managed to transfer some of his ardour even through the lengthy mail to "Our Firm," so that when the river route reopened, a double consignment of dry goods took advantage of the water. The last penny, too, of the fifty pounds had gone, through Mr. Mossop's agency, in handkerchiefs of brand new design, more heraldic, more patriotic than ever, and guiltless of cards. Perhaps Alexander Blooker felt that, so far as he was concerned, British civilisation was bringing no evil in its train.

And it was not. It was curious, indeed, to see how the Distant Dépôt had improved in tone. Franz Braun, who, deprived by the difficulty of carriage of sufficient lager beer to satisfy him, had taken to overmuch whisky instead, now, greatly to the delight of his *Verlobte*, satisfied his thirst on home-made gingerpop, brewed by a recipe of Alexander's aunt, while the old pastor gave in with smiling acquiescence to the appropriation by Alexander Blooker of what might be called "parochial work." In fact, there was some talk of building another shanty as a parish hall; for the little man was distinctly churchy and liked things in order. A temperance league and a band of hope had, combined with an enlarged liver, made the liquor storekeeper take leave home; and Alexander having offered to run the business until another man could come out, was now conducting it with an odd mixture of conscience and commerce.

So the eve of the next yearly market came round, and Alexander, in a fervour of Imperialism, actually climbed up the telegraph-post which stood in one corner of his compound, and nailed a pocket-handkerchief to it flag-wise.

"So!" called Franz Braun from over the way, half-jocularly, half-vexedly. "The patrol will at you haf damages when he returns."

For that single wire which sped seawards from north to south was patrolled at intervals by a staff of engineers from the former.

"He has paid his last visit for the cool season," said Alexander knowingly, "so there it can stay, if it likes, for the next four months, at any rate."

"I wish that to me came the same certainty of liking," growled Franz Braun; "but, see you, the Herr Papa ails, and the *Verlobte* wishes him to the Homeland to take, and I would also go if I could."

A vague alarm showed on Alexander Blooker's face. "And leave me here alone? I'm glad you can't."

The idea, however, stuck in his brain. Supposing he were left alone, what would he do?

After he had arranged everything to his liking for the morrow, this idea of perfect solitude kept him from sleep, and he strolled out with a pipe to quiet his nerves in the desert.

What would he do if he were left alone? A certain elation mixed with his natural dread. He walked, and walked, scarcely thinking out the question, only feeling it in that big heart of his. He had instinctively followed the telegraph-line himself, so as to be sure of not losing his way, but now he started at the sight of a solitary figure before him, visible in the moonlight, advancing to him and keeping the same bee-line, swiftly, yet stumbly, with a pause as for a few seconds' rest at each post. It was someone who was ill, or very, very tired.

A woman, a native woman! He could hear her voice now in her pauses. Always the same words mumbled mechanically over and over again.

"Save me, Queen-of-the-handkerchiefs! Save me——"

He knew enough of the language now to understand so much, and he waited, watching her curiously.

Across the last gap she stumbled towards him, gave one surprised look at him, and—with a vague effort at the same words, as if he had been a telegraph-post—sank down in a dead faint.

She was quite a slip of a girl, and after a time she came to herself; but she was so exhausted that it was past grey dawn when Alexander Blooker managed to get her back to the telegraph-post in the corner of his compound; and to this she clung pertinaciously, much to his annoyance, for he wanted to get her out of the way and find out who she was, and what she wanted, before the native traders began to turn up.

His remonstrances, however, were in vain. Her only reply was a murmured, incoherent repetition of her first appeal.

"Save me, Queen-of-the-handkerchiefs!"

And every time she said it Alexander Blooker experienced a patriotic thrill down

his back. He felt that she must at all costs be saved—but from what?

The dawn grew from grey to gold.

"*Gott im Himmel!*" laughed Franz Braun, coming down very early because of something he had forgotten. "Mein Alexander mit a *Mädchen!* Ach! fie!"

"Stop your silly jaw and find out what she is wanting!" cried Alexander Blooker fiercely, "or help me to get her into the shanty before the traders come."

"*Mein Brüderlein!*" replied Franz Braun solemnly, "when you have so long as me been in savage places, you will not-to-redress-women's-wrongs learn."

Alexander Blooker swelled visibly. "That sentiment is made in Germany, sir. She has appealed to that"—he pointed to the flag pocket-handkerchief on the telegraph-post which was waving in the breeze of dawn—"and, by George! she shall have protection!"

There was nothing more to be said, not even when some of the traders, coming on the scene, recognised the girl as the daughter of a powerful chief in the northern land who would be certain to give trouble were she harboured by the Distant Dépôt. It would be better to send her back in their charge. How she had found her way so far was a mystery; she must have followed the telegraph-posts day by day, have slept in their shadow night by night.

Some vague, confused sense of the poetry of this—night after night sleeping all unconsciously, as it were, under the flag of England, day after day following the course of light to freedom, rose in Alexander's throat and half-choked him.

"She shall stay," he said. "Let her father come to fetch her; if he is in the right, he shall have her."

"My dear sir," quavered old Pastor Schmidt, "he will not time for explanation give. I was in a to-be-compared position once. I will not be so again. I will take my daughterling away. I will go. There is no good in staying to be massacred when pension has become due."

It was all to no purpose. Alexander Blooker stood firm. The utmost he would do was to write a conciliatory letter for the traders to give on their return to the girl's father, saying that his daughter had been handed over to the charge of a suitable matron, and that he might have her again if adequate explanations were tendered to Her Gracious Britannic Majesty's representative at the Distant Dépôt. And here the great tempta-



From the lessening speck of the boat as it drifted downwards on the current came half-regretful, half-joyful farewells."

tion of his life came to Alexander Blooker. He would have loved to sign himself "Consul C.M.G." No one would be the wiser. But the sense of duty was strong within him and he refrained.

This being so, Pastor Schmidt incontinently determined not to brave the certainty, as he deemed it, of coming trouble. His Society in the West was prepared for his possible return. The details of how the work could be carried on by a native deacon during the six months before a new pastor could arrive were all settled. Nothing but a half-conscious feeling that to retire would be to sign his warrant of dismissal from what had been to him his life, had kept him

hitherto from decision. Now, the river was falling fast; they must take their chance of escape while they could get it.

And Franz Braun? After two days of moody helping to pack his *Verlobte's* belongings, he came to say, not without a certain tremble in his voice—

"*Brüderlein*, I also go—so far, anyhow—my firm said so much a month ago—to-night thou wilt be alone."

There was not much time for Alexander Blooker to realise his position until, as the cool of the night came on, he stood by the last little landing-stage on the river, watching the Noah's Ark boat as it punted its way slowly through the network of sand-banks.

Behind him, as he stood, flared the red glories of the setting sun; in front of him the long stretches of sand, the winding gleams of the shrinking river were fast losing each other in the purple-blue shadows of coming night. From the lessening speck of the boat as it drifted downwards on the current came half-regretful, half-joyful farewells. The native congregation assembled in full force sent after it wailing outcries; but Alexander Blooker was silent, save for one brief "Good-bye, Fräulein Anna! Good-bye, Pastor Schmidt!—Good-bye, Franz Braun!"

The sliding shadow of the boat had disappeared into the oncoming night for his short-sighted eyes long before the still-savage congregation lost it, but he stood staring on where it had been long after they had gone home contentedly. Then he turned suddenly. The red had almost faded from the sky. Only low down on the horizon lay a band of what Ruskin held to be the highest light—pure vermilion—and against it he could see the telegraph-post, with a black speck that must be the pocket-handkerchief of England flying at its peak.

He drew a long breath. For the first time in his life Alexander Blooker felt that he was not a slave.

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*

Six months after, the first *doongah* of the season punted and sailed up the river again. The Distant Depôt was deserted; but there was no sign of disorder in it. The English flag still flew from the telegraph-post. The Pastor's house, which Alexander Blooker had been implored to occupy and keep in order, looked, save for the dust which always gathered from the desert, as if he must have been there but a few days before. The garden was ablaze with flowers. The clusters of native huts had disappeared, and in their place neat streets of low wattle and dab dwellings converged outwards from quite an imposing edifice with "Church Hall" marked on it conspicuously. The liquor-shop had disappeared. Franz Braun's dry-goods-store was closed, and the British one removed to a portion of the central building.

The little Mission Chapel also was utterly changed—the seats removed to make room for clean matting on which the native congregation could squat; everything Western or

of Western symbolism had been swept away, and in their place, ingeniously adapted to their present purpose, were things held sacred by the natives. Here an English school had evidently had its quarters, for copy-books headed in a neat hand: "If you take an inch, you may as well take an ell," were found there. Also a few chapters of the New Testament written out in the same handwriting.

The tiny cemetery behind the chapel, surrounded on three sides by banana thickets, remained unaltered, save that, just under the east window, three of the heraldic pocket-handkerchiefs were pegged to the ground in an oblong.

What had happened?

The yearly market-day brought vague, inconsistent rumours from the mouths of many merchants.

Nothing was known for certain. The "Lord-of-Handkerchiefs" had remained, of course. It was said that the chief had come for his daughter. Nothing had happened. Only the Handkerchief-Lord had, as they might see, built palaces.

He was a Great Chief. The people simply would not live without him when he died. So, at least, they had said as they came through the villages beyond the desert on their way north. How long ago? Ah! not long; they were afraid, see you, of the new gentlemen. They preferred to begin afresh elsewhere. That would doubtless be his grave at the back of the chapel. He was a great loss to the country. No one gave handkerchiefs away as he did.

So the Distant Depôt had to go on its way without further details. Only the traces of Alexander Blooker's short rule remained, and the new inhabitants who soon gathered to fill the trim walls and dab houses, benefited by them.

One day, however, when almost a year had gone by, the new pastor found that the oblong of handkerchiefs in the cemetery, instead of being worn and faded by sun and rain, was, apparently, brand new.

Someone must have renewed it in the night. And on the top of it, written out in wobbly round-hand, was the last copy Alexander Blooker had set—

"If you take an inch, you may as well take an ell."

From which the Distant Depôt inferred that it was his death-day.



THE SEASON'S REQUIREMENTS.

MISTRESS: Is anything wanted in the house besides tea?

JANE: Yes, please, mum, cook says she doesn't think there's enough china to last over Christmas as the shops will be closed on Boxing Day.

## THE EDITOR'S SCRAP-BOOK.

### MR. PETTIFER'S TURKEY.

*Jessie Pope.*

It was a most extraordinary thing that Mr. Pettifer should have got half way home on Christmas Eve before he remembered he had forgotten to buy the turkey. The fact was, he had been calling on one or two friends to wish them the compliments of the season, and that may have had something to do with it; but in any case he was thankful he remembered it in time, for his mother-in-law was coming to spend Christmas with him and his wife, and the news that he had forgotten the dinner would not have raised her already rather low opinion of his merits.

So he turned at once and retraced his footsteps in the snowy country road back to the town, for he lived at Maltby, a village three miles out.

Now, the first poulterer's he came to was in North Street, where he never remembered seeing a poulterer's before, and the proprietor standing at the door in his shirt-sleeves and striped apron was also a stranger to him and a man of queer and not too prepossessing an appearance. However, there was a magnificent turkey on the marble slab, and Mr. Pettifer did not want to walk all the way back to the Market Square.

"That's a big bird, master," he said. The poulterer looked at him grimly.

"Yes," he replied, "it is."



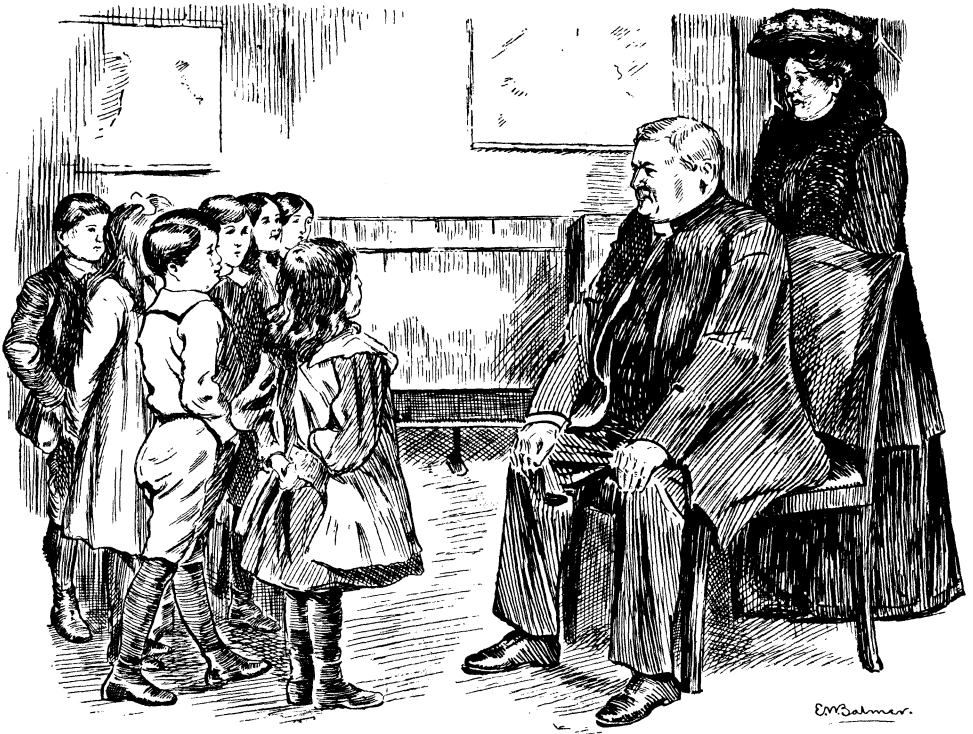
"And you'll want a big price for 'im?" said Mr. Pettifer in a wheedling way. The poulterer looked at him again, then said—

"Ten bob!" Mr. Pettifer could not believe his ears.

"Why, what's the matter with it?" he ejaculated.

"Look and see!" said the poulterer. Mr. Pettifer did, and could find nothing. It was plump and juicy and well developed; in fact, an ideal bird, and Mr. Pettifer concluded the bargain with a satisfaction that was evidently shared by the poulterer.

of hot to brace him up for his three-mile walk, and it was nine o'clock before he found himself in the lane that led to his home two miles distant. It was just about here that the parcel began to get very heavy, and the string came off. Mr. Pettifer was stout, and his arms were shortish; but, having lost the string, he substituted his long, rope-like woollen comforter, though this did not help much, for whether he rested the turkey on his hip, or shifted it on his shoulder, or hugged it in his arms, it always seemed to slip away from his clutch as if bewitched. And all at once Mr. Pettifer trod on a lump of frozen snow—or so he



OCULAR EVIDENCE.

VICAR (introducing the story of Jacob's vision): Now, who was it that slept with a stone for his pillow, and had a wonderful dream?

LITTLE EMILY (with vivid memories of the pantomime): Please, sir, Dick Whittington.

"A big bird like that would take a lot of killing," he mused aloud, while the poulterer was with some difficulty making a brown-paper parcel of it.

"Ah!" replied the man, "and some of 'em sham dead, that's the trouble."

"What! Not when their feathers are off?" said Mr. Pettifer.

"Oh, no, of course not," assented the poulterer, as he took the money and placed the turkey in the arms of Mr. Pettifer, who started off for home, very pleased with himself and proud of his bargain.

Now, all would have gone well if Mr. Pettifer had not stopped at the Old Gate House for a glass

says—and sat down on the road, with the parcel skidding away several yards in front of him.

The lane was deserted, but the moonlight on the snow made it almost as light as day, and Mr. Pettifer declares there can be no doubt about what he saw next.

Now, what happened was this. First of all came the sound of the tearing of paper, and the parcel rolled over and over in the snow of its own volition, then through a hole in the paper the turkey's head suddenly popped out like a jack-in-the-box. Mr. Pettifer, seated on the snow, with his mouth sagging open with amazement, declares that the turkey looked in his direction and deliberately winked at him, and after that, with



A GREETING TO FATHER CHRISTMAS



## CONSISTENCY.

"You really must let me have that tenner you owe me."

"You shall have it this week, certain, dear boy."

"You said that the last time I asked you for it."

"Ah—yes—well, I'm not the sort of chap who says one thing one day, and something else the next, you know!"

a few more rolls and plunges, extricated itself from its wrappings, and stood upon its feet, a bit shaky at first, but gaining steadiness with practice, and trembling with cold as the icy wind blew upon its pale and naked body. It was very obvious to Mr. Pettifer that the poor thing missed its feathers terribly, but it was evidently a bird of resource, for it walked deliberately to where the long woollen comforter lay like a dark snake on the ground, and seizing one end in its beak it gyrated round and round in a kind of Maud Allan dance, until the comforter was neatly wound round its body, and ended in a little tuft where its tail should have been. Then it once more looked over its shoulder at Mr. Pettifer, once more winked at him solemnly, then crossing the road with a stately, high-stepping stride, wriggled through a hole in the hedge and disappeared.

Mr. Pettifer says he *thinks* at that point he must have lost consciousness; in any case, it was some considerable time later that he found himself, with faltering footsteps, walking up the garden path to the door of his house. It was immediately opened by his wife.

"Oh, my dear," she exclaimed, "how late you are! But I'm so glad you haven't got a turkey, because mother isn't coming, after all, and has sent us a goose instead."

So, under the circumstances, and taking all things into consideration, Mr. Pettifer decided not to relate his strange and tragic story to his wife. He said he was afraid she would not believe it.

Which was probably true.

## A BALLADE OF YULE.

The gladsome sound of carolling,  
Out in the gloomy street I hear,  
And "Hark, the herald angels sing!"  
Is borne upon the list'ning ear:  
The heartless waits now far, now near  
Ridiculous make the sublime,  
Yet let us not be too severe,  
For once again 'tis Christmas-time.

Though dull without be everything,  
E'en though the morn be dark and drear,  
It naught but happiness should bring,  
And banishment to every tear:  
Though frozen be the little mere,  
And whitened everything with rime,  
It will not surely interfere—  
For once again 'tis Christmas-time.

Let jest abound, let laughter ring,  
Although the cynical may jeer;  
At every festive gathering  
May melancholy disappear:  
For every friend, the loved, the dear,  
The absent ones in foreign clime,  
May our good wishes be sincere,  
For once again 'tis Christmas-time.

## L'Envoi.

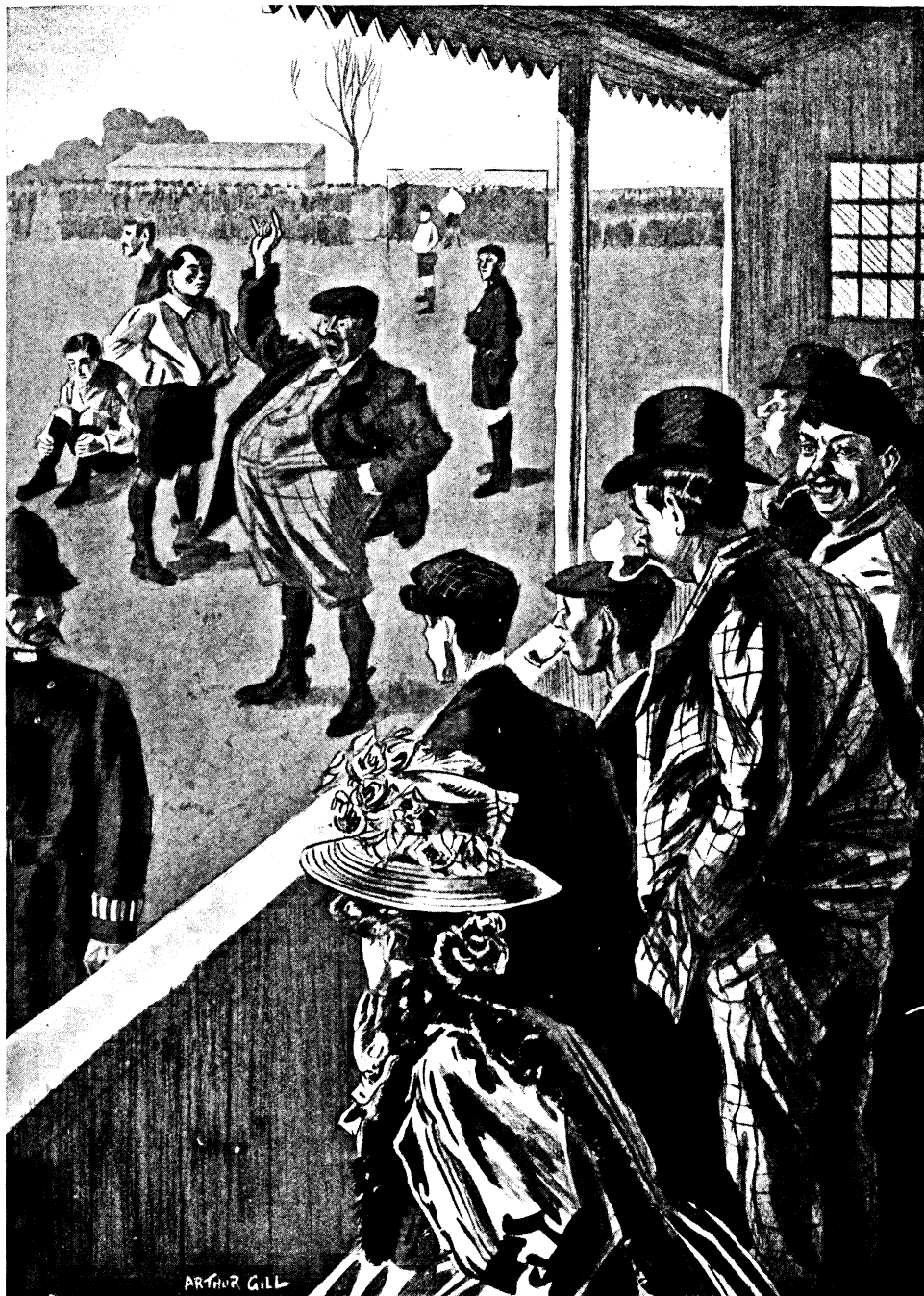
Friends, ere 'tis yet another year,  
To welcome in with merry chime,  
We'll speed the old with right good cheer,  
For once again 'tis Christmas-time.

E. F. Allnutt.



## MORE MISSING LINKS.

HE: I am waiting for an interesting woman of thirty.  
SHE: Then you will have a long time to wait. All the women here under sixty are not over twenty-four.



AFTER THE BALL WAS KICKED OVER THE PAVILION.

'Ria: Wot's the ref. 'ollerin' for, Bill?  
Bill: W'y, e's *swallered* the ball!



## BACK TO THE LAND.

**POULTRY ENTHUSIAST:** Have you read that article on "How to Tell a Bad Egg"?

**FACETIOUS TOWNSMAN:** No; but if you have anything important to tell a bad egg, my advice is, break it gently.

## THE MASCOTS IN THE PUDDING.

**Wedding Ring:** Marriage. **Button:** Bachelor.  
**Three penny Bit:** Wealth. **Thimble:** Old Maid.

We ate the pudding piping hot,  
With folks industriously nimble;  
And when we'd polished off the lot  
(And all had had too much, I wot),  
A merry voice exclaimed: "Who's got  
The thimble?"

For grandpa, dreadful to relate  
(Whose diet *should* be fruit and mutton  
Because his years are eighty-eight;  
But who'd transgressed to celebrate  
The season), found upon his plate  
The button.

And Marjorie had got the ring,  
Sweet token that a maid bewitches;  
And Dick was happy as a king,  
For from his slice came issuing  
The silver coin that's bound to bring  
Great riches.

'Twas then I saw May's cheeks aflame,  
And other eyes my glances followed,  
*She'd* found the thimble, badge of shame,  
But lacked the pluck to play the game  
And somewhere had concealed the same—  
*Or swallowed!*

At a Christmas party it was suggested that the guests should play a game called "Grimaces," which consisted in the company making the most hideous grimaces they could, while the bashful young man had to award the prize to the ugliest contortion. The judge did not hesitate in his duty, but after a searching glance round the room went up to his hostess's maiden aunt and said—

"I award you the prize without any hesitation."  
"Oh," said the lady, looking up from her knitting, "but I wasn't playing."

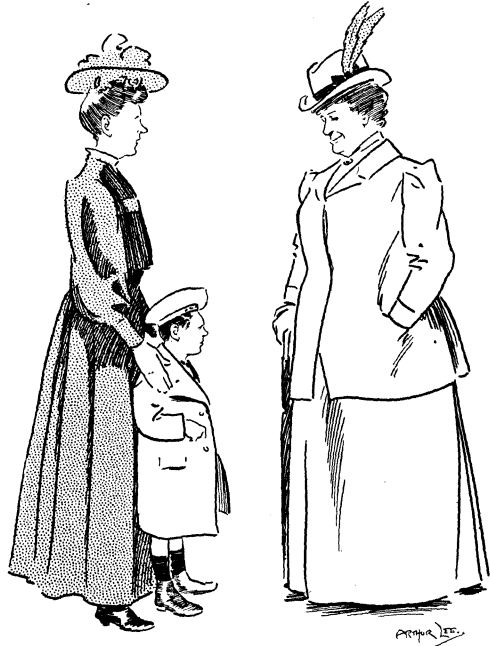


## THE BEGINNING.

I once wished Love would come my way,  
(I felt so bored with naught to do)  
To spend an hour one sunny day  
At tea perhaps at croquet too.  
Love came—to sip a cup of tea,  
A pleasant little chap was he.

Love came again—dropped in to dinner!  
He had so many things to say—  
The next thing was the little sinner  
Returned again—to spend the day.  
And now the little wretch is so  
Importunate—I wish he'd go!

P. D. Vine.



## "A LITTLE KNOWLEDGE——"

**FRIEND OF THE FAMILY:** And what are you learning at school now, Tommy?

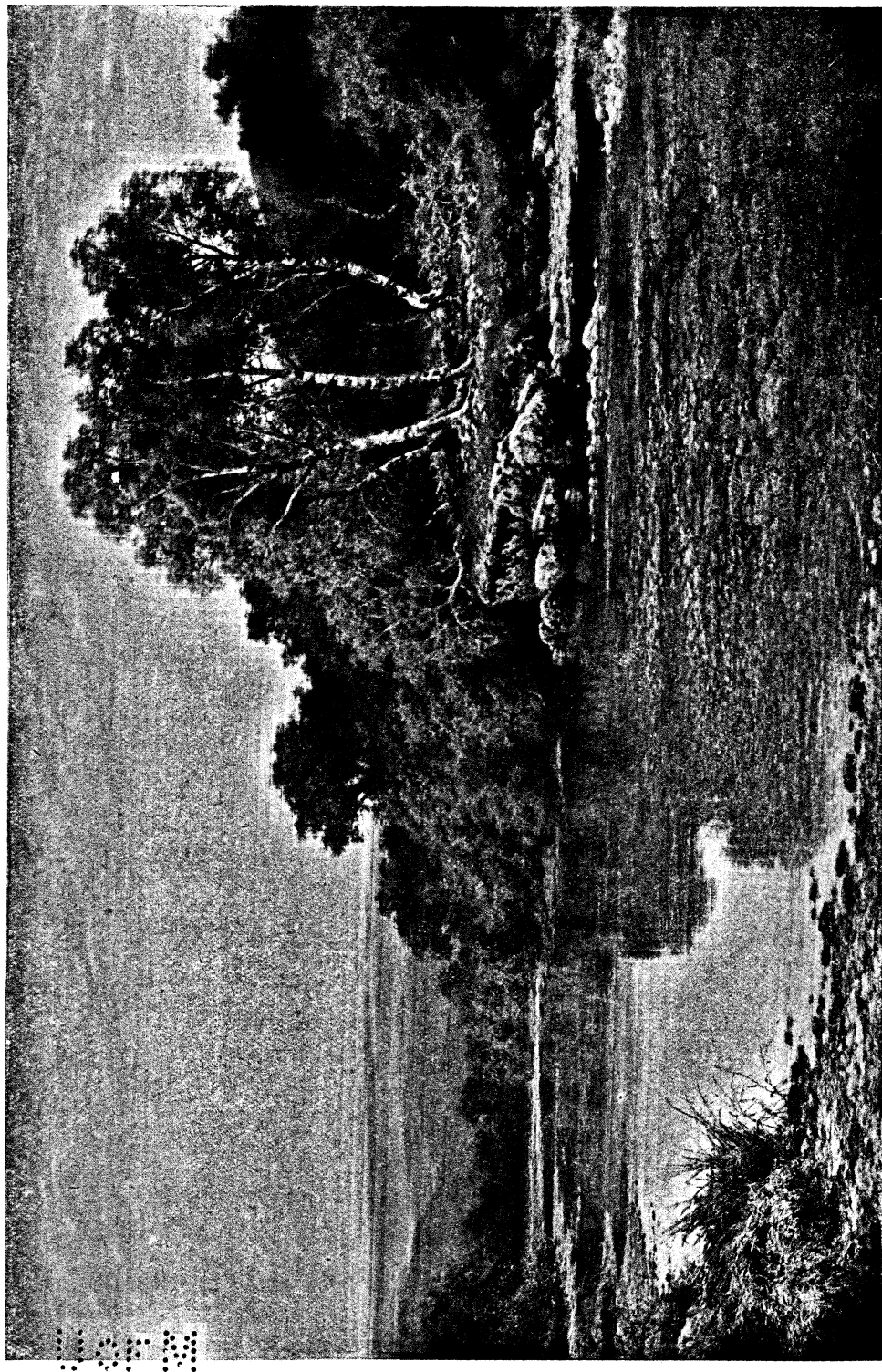
**TOMMY:** Oh, gozinter, chiefly.

**FRIEND OF THE FAMILY:** What's that? A new language?

**TOMMY** (wearily): No, just gozinter—one gozinter two, two gozinter four, three gozinter six.







"A SHALLOW STREAM AT EVENTIDE." BY B. W. LEADER, R.A.

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"THE PLOUGHMAN HOMEWARD PLODS HIS WEARY WAY." BY B. W. LEADER, R.A.

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## THE ART OF MR. B. W. LEADER, R.A.

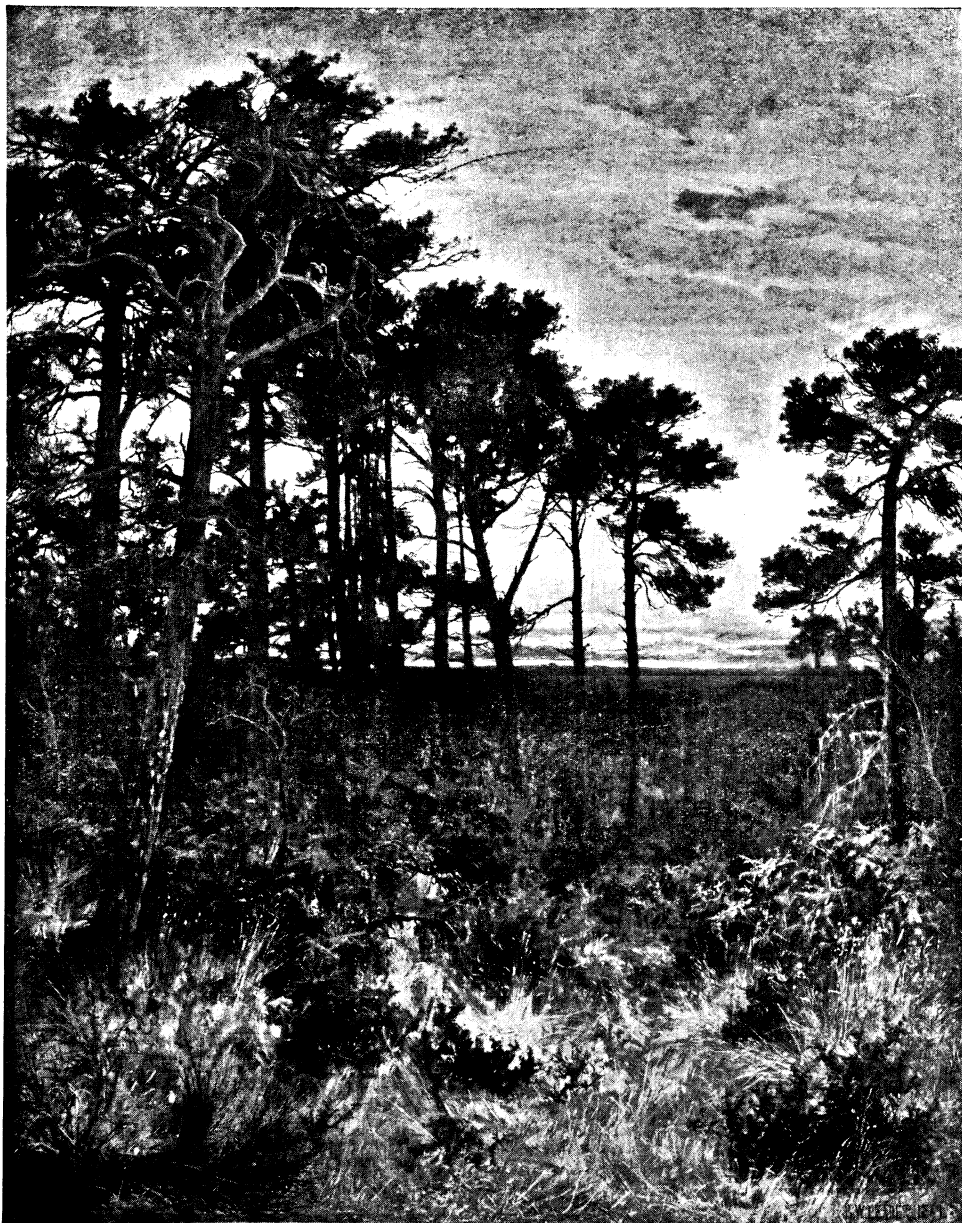
BY AUSTIN CHESTER.

MR. LEADER, the son of a distinguished civil engineer, had the good fortune to have in his father a lover of art whose great happiness was found in making sketching excursions, in which the boy usually accompanied him, so that when he had reached ten years of age, he was already an expert in Nature's many moods. Thus his love of art may well be said to have antedated his professional practice of it. To quote an article which appeared in *The Art Journal*, father and son would start out together, from their home at Worcester, for some attractive spot on the banks of the Severn, made familiar to the father by the work he was doing in those years for the Severn Navigation Commission, and when he proceeded to sketch, it was "to the great delight of his young boy, who would stand by watching him, and would sometimes take advantage of his temporary absence from the easel to put in a few finishing touches of his own."

Mr. Benjamin Williams Leader was born in 1831. He was educated at Worcester Grammar School, and his father, intending

to bring up his son to his own profession, "caused him to pursue a course of study that would fit him for it; but the youth found much more pleasure in sketching the picturesque lanes and cottages of his native country than in taking measurements and laying down formal plans and elevations of locks and weirs." That he made some progress in science is, however, indicated by the fact that, when he had left the grammar school and was employed by his father in his office, he helped to build a lock or two before turning his back, as a profession, on engineering.

The evenings of the lad, whose days were employed in his father's office, were passed in the town's School of Design, where the compass and the rule were discarded in favour of training by the eye, and the details of mechanical draughtsmanship superseded by those of the artistic. He was twenty-one when he literally threw his cap over the wind-mills which he may have helped to construct, and, submitting the drawing of qualification necessary to admittance to the Academy Schools, was entered there as a student,



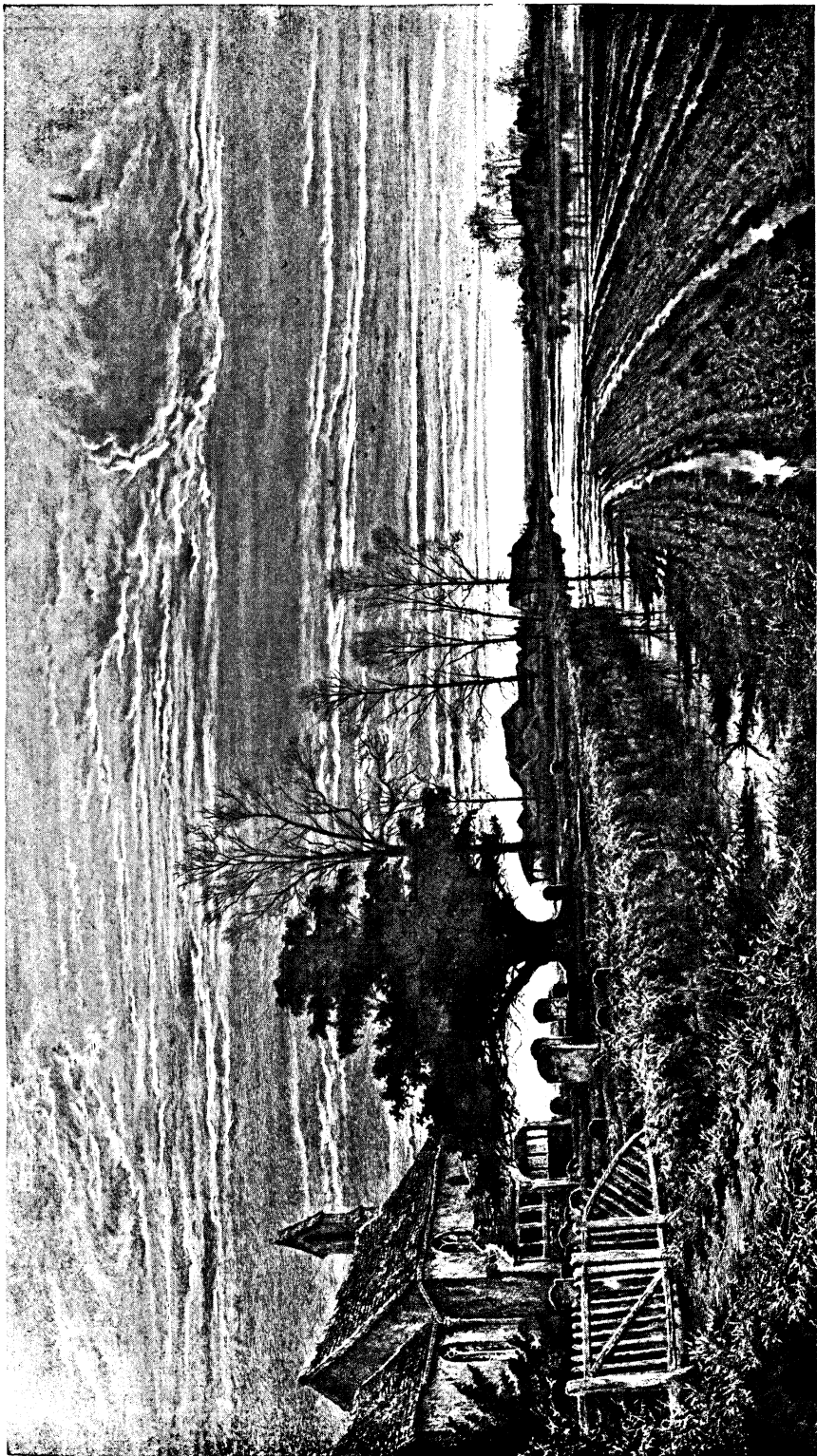
"SOLITUDE." BY B. W. LEADER, R.A.

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there to breathe in a new world and become a new being. He had already spent much time in sketching, as is instanced by the fact that the year of his entrance as student at the Schools showed him an exhibitor on the Academy walls, and, with the picture entitled "Cottage Children Blowing Bubbles," he began that long course of demonstration of his talent which, with one year's exception,

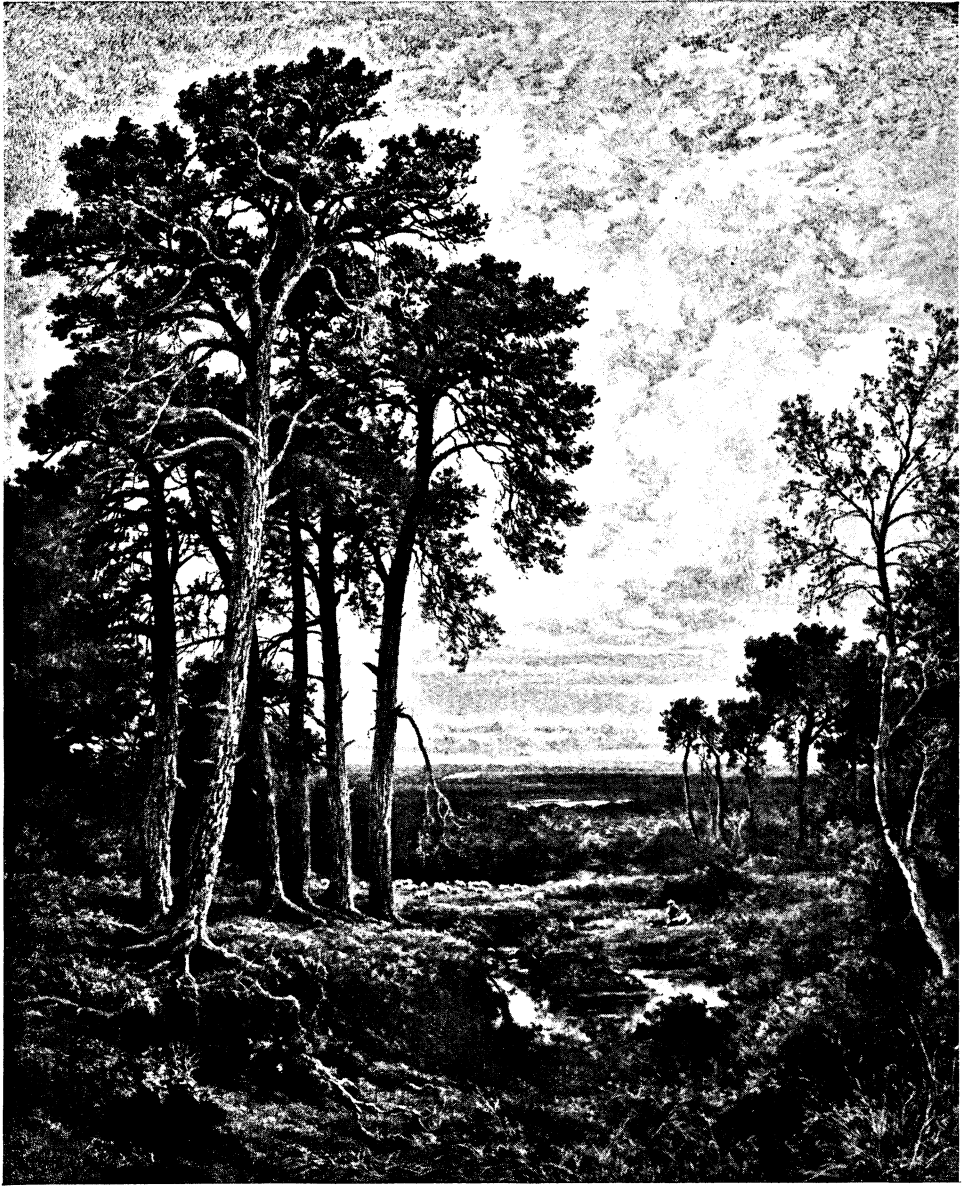
that of 1858, has made his name an integral part of the construction of each successive year's official catalogue.

The pictures which Mr. Leader exhibited in those years show the choice of direction of his talent not to have been definitely fixed, for, in 1856, he sent to the Academy a subject-picture entitled "The Young Mother," which revealed him as largely



"AT EVENING TIME IT SHALL BE LIGHT." BY B. W. LEADER, R.A.  
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"THE WEALD OF SURREY." BY B. W. LEADER, R.A.

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influenced by the Pre-Raphaelitism which, at that time, was altering the whole complexion of British art. But with the exception of those few pictures, painted in the first years of his artistic career, his methods both of seeing and execution may be said to have been entirely those of natural expression. In fact, Mr. Leader is one of the few living English painters who

have resisted even approximation to standards of taste other than their own.

When men were rushing to France, drawn there by the magnetism of the great personalities, Millet, Corot, and Courbet, the real originators of French contemporary art, in the hope to learn from them how to look at Nature, how to select from her, how to compose from her those essentials which go

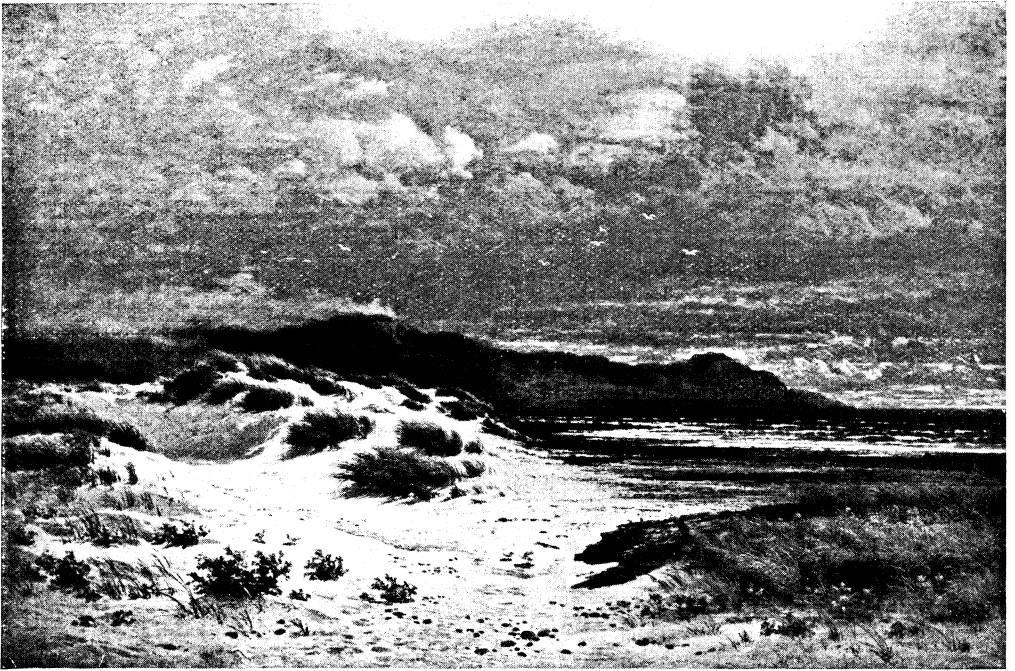


"THE SILENT EVENING HOUR." BY B. W. LEADER, R.A.  
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to form a picture, how to paint, both with regard to values and with a full, assured brush; while these men were analysing colours and shadows, arguing upon the quality of light and its dependence upon local colour; whether colour itself was affected in tone by the reflections cast from adjacent objects—pushing forward, in fact, investigations in light and drawing distinctions from different conditions of weather, season, time of day, and locality—Mr. Leader was pursuing his own independent course and gaining, day by day, a firm and yet firmer hold upon popular sympathies and taste.

The truth of this observation leads us to assume that the happiest moments of a painter are probably not those of productivity, but those of receptivity; moments in which the impress made upon his malleable sense of beauty, by evanescent and intangible aspects of the outside world, gives to him the active hope to express those aspects later by means of his talent. In those moments he must be completely happy; he has within him the promise of achievement, and is, for the time, forgetful of those hours when he has to wrestle with the difficulty of translating into a medium hard to manipulate that emotional expression which, no matter how well he



"THE SANDY MARGIN OF THE SEA." BY R. W. LEADER, R.A.

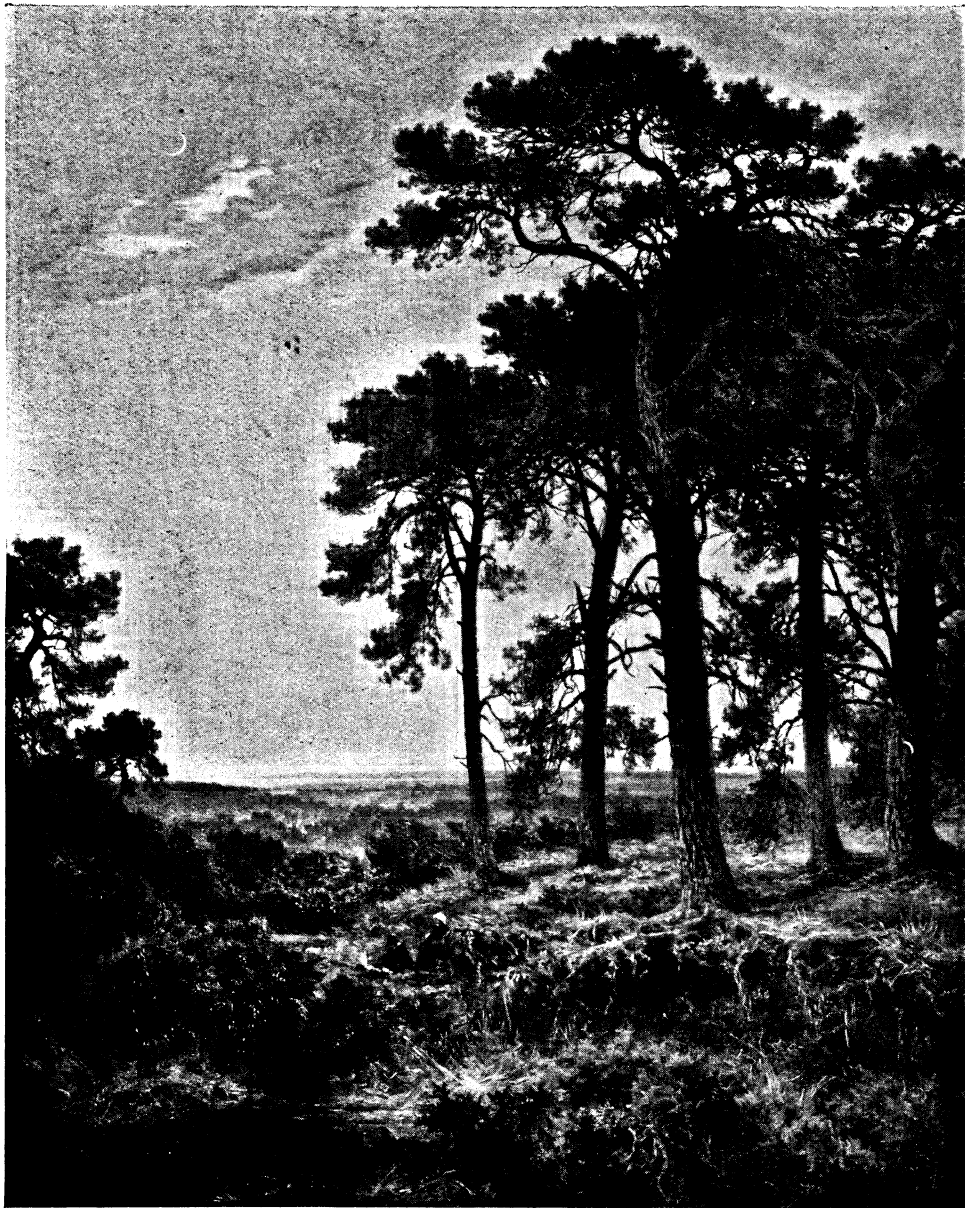
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A brother landscape-painter, Mr. Alfred Parsons, A.R.A., in an interesting book he published a few years ago, called "Notes on Japan," writes: "An artist often hears the remark: 'You must find painting a great resource,' as if painting were an amusement like golf or trout-fishing; and, no doubt, to many people, a landscape-painter's life seems like one long holiday; but the struggle with ever-changing skies and fast-fading flowers has its fatigues, and the mind gets wearied of thinking how this and that ought to be painted."

translates it, leaves him when his task is accomplished always discontented with even his highest achievements. He, a landscape-painter, borrows a theme from Nature and employs it, as does a musician the melody in his fugue, and, as with the musician, the synthesis of the whole proves or denies his artistry, and we get from the same melody, to continue our musical comparison, the grandeur of a Beethoven sonata or the trivial prettiness of a "Mrs. 'Enery 'Awkins." Each painter seeks to express his emotional conception of a scene, but painting, like poetry, depends



"AT THE CLOSE OF DAY, WHEN THE HAMLET IS STILL." BY B. W. LEADER, R.A.  
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"THE EVENING HOUR." BY B. W. LEADER, R.A.

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upon the ability of the producer to recognise the grand unobtrusiveness of Nature. There must, on his part, be a great negation of those fugitive phrases of the delicious and charming order, those commonplace incidents, catchpenny attractions to the vulgar, which are the external trimmings of Nature's underlying poetry.

One art always envelops another, and as we feel the colours of the painter's palette in the poet's voice, so do we get an echo of the poet's voice in the canvas of the painter.

It was recognition of this common character that made Michael Angelo write verse ; led Dante once to prepare "to paint an Angel" ;



"ACROSS THE HEATH." BY B. W. LEADER, R.A.

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inspired Raphael to make "a century of sonnets"; Wordsworth to write—

Ah! then if mine had been the painter's hand  
To express what then I saw, and add the gleam,  
The light that never was on sea or land,  
The consecration, and the Poet's dream;

and led Blake and Rossetti to flame forth their thoughts in both mediums.

It is the influence of Nature upon the artistic temperament that enables it to see in her what Shelley called "unpremeditated art," and constrains the artist to become a voluntary labourer in the work of the erection of the House Beautiful.

malism below the deceptive humanity in many of the vagrants, even the hat, clothes, shoes, wherever these conveyed the remotest hint as to the real self of the wearer. . . . Certain things affected him extremely, particularly when 'a wave was billowing through a tree,' as he described the uplifting surge of air among swaying masses of chestnut or oak foliage, or when, afar off, he heard the wind roaming across woodlands. 'The tide! the tide!' he would cry delightedly, and spring on to some stile, or upon the low bough of a wayside tree, and watch the passage of the wind upon the

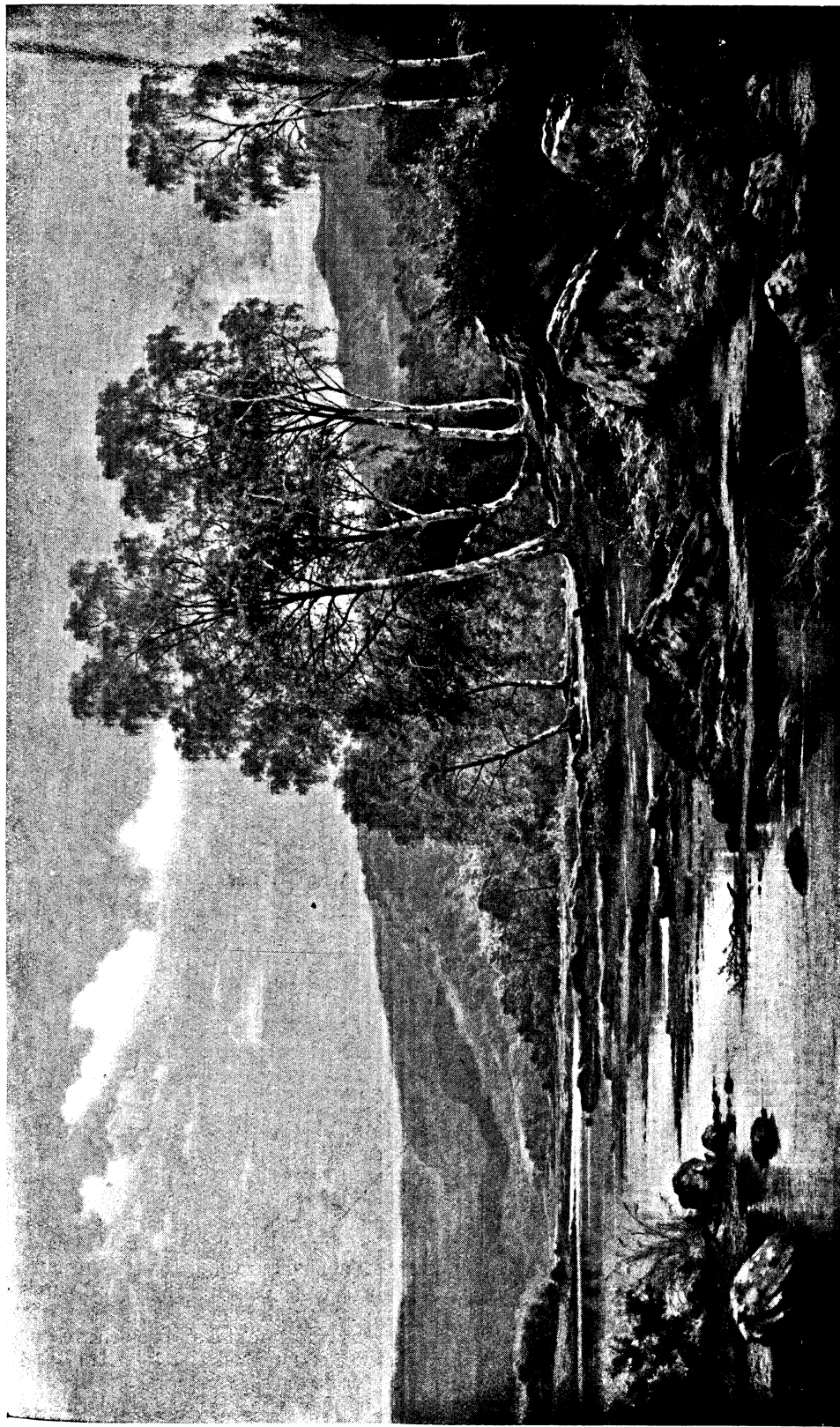


"ON THE GOLF LINKS, LITTLEHAMPTON." BY B. W. LEADER, R.A.

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Mr. William Sharp, in his "Life and Letters of Joseph Severn," tells us how the poet Keats would fall into an admirable ecstasy over the beauties of Nature, and how "nothing seemed to escape him, the song of a bird, and the undernote of response from covert or hedge, the rustle of some animal, the changing of the green and brown lights and furtive shadows, the motions of the wind—just how it took certain tall flowers and plants—the wayfaring of the clouds; even the features and gestures of certain tramps, the colour of one woman's hair, the smile on one child's face, the furtive ani-

meadow-grasses or young corn, not stirring till the flow of air was all around him, while an expression of rapture made his eyes gleam and his face glow till he would look like a wild fawn 'waiting for some cry from the forest depths,' or like a young eagle 'staring with proud joy' before taking flight. Had Keats learnt the strange, technical processes of paint, he would doubtless have been a poet amongst painters, for these words written of him might just as easily have been applied to a painter, for in both poet and painter the 'feeling for beauty deepens from sensation to emotion, and from emotion to a



"THE VALLEY OF THE LLUGWY." BY B. W. LEADER, R.A.

*From the picture in the National Gallery of British Art, reproduced by permission of the Autotype Company, New Oxford Street, W.C., owners of the copyright and publishers of the large plate.*

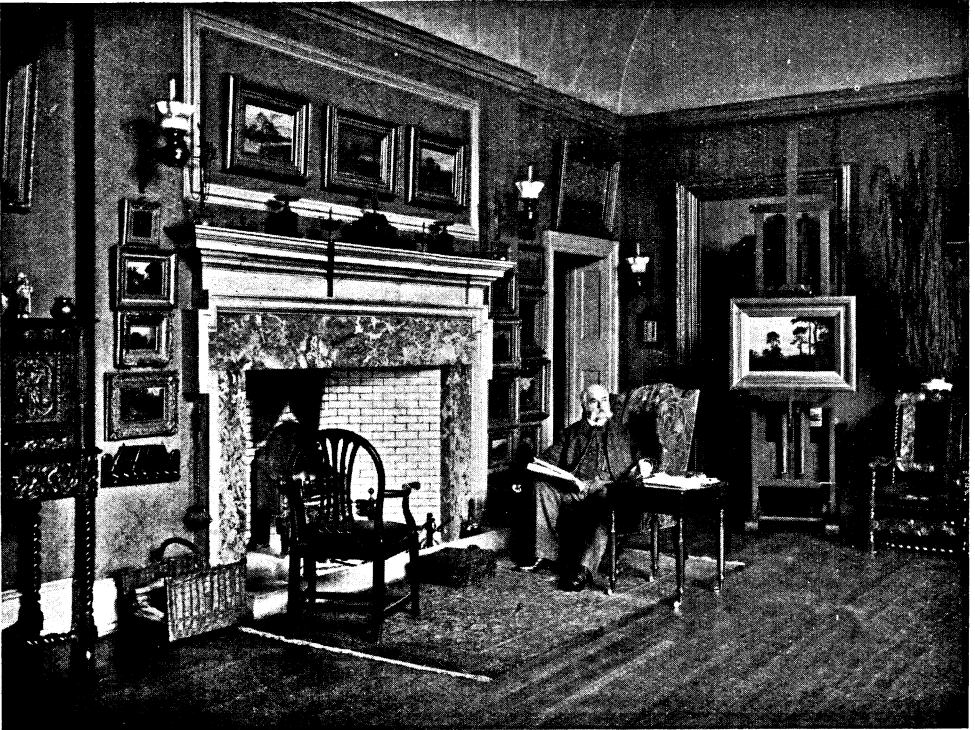


passion which embraces his whole moral and intellectual being, as the conviction grows upon him that he, the artist, if only for the sake of his art, must be ready to open his heart and mind to receive all impressions the world has to offer."

How open is the mind of Mr. Leader to the emotional element in Nature is shown by his choice again and yet again of delineation of that evening hour which is ever weighted with an exquisite clarity, an almost burdensome solemnity. As early as 1855 we had a picture from his brush entitled "Evening—

is Set," "At the Close of Day, when the Hamlet is Still," and the picture which is perhaps one of the most popular of the series, "The Ploughman homeward plods his weary way."

All and each reveal how acutely alive is their painter to the fact that earth has not anything to show more fair than this hour. That it is an hour which pleads for exaltation of humble toil, which etherealises the commonplace with a magic cleanness and probity that are akin to spotless bodily cleanliness and scrupulous personal honour;



MR. B. W. LEADER, R.A., IN HIS STUDIO AT BURROWS CROSS, GOMSHALL, SURREY.

*From a photograph by E. H. Mills.*

Return to the Homestead." In 1860 came "Evening—North Wales," and since then he has given us "Still Evening," "An Autumn Evening in the Valley of Lledr," "An Autumn Evening," "Autumn Evening—Barges Passing Lock on the Thames," "A November Evening—Clearing Up After Rain," "The Last Gleam," "At Evening Time it shall be Light," "Parting Day," "An Autumn Evening," "The End of the Day," "The Silent Evening Hour," "Still Evening," "Evening," "Evening Glow," "A Golden Eve," "Evening's Last Gleam," "When Sun

one in which the familiar becomes strange, and the face of the casually met labourer appears to be hewn in ivory, and he, uncoupled from the chains which ordinarily bind him to earth, takes his part as actor in the slow, unfolding beatific vision, as he travels the muddy road, become the complement of an orange sky, a path of royal purple.

Fond as Mr. Leader is of painting that hour when Nature takes upon herself an expression of awe, and allows human beings to give prose the slip, and awake, as he is, to the sort of religious solemnity which then



“THE MANCHESTER SHIP CANAL IN 1891.” BY B. W. LEADER, R.A.

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hangs above the pastoral world, he is equally gifted, and with a quite unusual sensibility, with power to understand her many other mood. He has a sense—

'Tis, but I cannot name it, 'tis the sense  
Of majesty, and beauty, and repose,  
A blended holiness of earth and sky,  
Something that makes this individual spot,  
This small abiding-place of many men,  
A termination, and a last retreat.

He gives utterance to the aspects of Morning in such pictures as "A Fine Morning in Early Spring," "A Dewy Morning on the Mountains, Capel Curig," "Morning—the Banks of the Ivy O," "The Dawn of an Autumn Day," "A Sunny Morning." He sings the praise of Afternoon light in "Autumn Afternoon, Worcester," "A Sunny Afternoon, North Wales," "A Sunny Autumn Afternoon, North Wales." He painted his impression of "A Bright Night at Goring" in 1873, but his most important picture of Night is that of "Tintern Abbey—Moonlight on the Wye," familiar to us through the engraving by Cousins. This picture, exhibited at the French Gallery, Pall Mall, in 1872, was written of by the critic of *The Art Journal* as a work "of infinite beauty, painted not for to-day or to-morrow, but with a mastery which will prolong its existence, mellowed and chastened, for an unlimited period of years."

In like sequence to his passage through the hours, he has travelled through the seasons of the year, and given us the eloquent picture of "February Fillydye"; and, advancing further along the months, "An April Day." Spring generally—the sweet Spring, that is "The Year's Pleasant King"—is illustrated in its many moods by such pictures as "The Hayfield" and "A Sheepfold."

As for Summer—there are so many summer pictures in Mr. Leader's gallery that they are hard to particularise, but amongst the best known of that season are

his "English Cottage Homes," "Worcester Cathedral," "An Old English Homestead," and "The Valley of the Llugwy," a picture which is in the National Gallery of British Art.

Autumn, with its many fugitive tints, has attracted him to its portrayal even more than has done the full leafage of summer, and we have pictures of autumn in Worcestershire, in North Wales, at Stratford-on-Avon, on the Thames at Streatley, in Switzerland and in Surrey, all of them full of that pictorial synthesis of which we have already spoken as so necessary a part of art, and with which no other living painter is more greatly gifted than Mr. B. W. Leader. It is from this fine feeling of putting together that Mr. Leader's pictures lose far less of their charm in reproduction in black-and-white than do those of many other landscape painters.

The skill with which he employs this not by any means the least important item of the painter's equipment can be traced in every one of his canvases, and the method in which he manages to bring together in their right places the innumerable lines and tones, and this without flaw or fallacy, is far more evident in black-and-white than when we see the pictures themselves in colour.

In addition, he has a sincere and pleasant sense of the pictorial in landscape, knows exactly when distance should bereave a canvas of those complications which are often the artist's greatest pitfall, and while his work is explicit and studied enough to satisfy the needs of those who demand of a painter a certain literalism, he never forgets that in simplicity lies the artist's greatest strength.

He would be the first to acknowledge that he has failed to reach the unapproachable standard set by Nature, but that she has exercised over him, in his endeavour to reach that standard,

A happy, genial influence  
Coming one knows not how nor whence,

none of his many admirers can doubt.



# MRS. O'DEA'S LODGER.

By DOROTHEA CONYERS.



“**L** WAS nivir yit,” said Mrs. O’Dea importantly, “mistook as to a man’s character. Nor was I iver took in as some other I could mintion.” Her glance was plain. “Not tin minnits pasht I was

makin’ in from feedin’ the pigs, an’ I see James here with a face on him like week-ould milk turnin’ away a dacent little felly with a pack on his back. Directin’ him down to yerself, he was, Mrs. Clancy, saying he’d lie chaper there.”

The laugh which fat Mrs. Clancy gave was one of absolute good humour. She kept the second lodging-house in the little town of Abbeyduff, and had held amicable feud for many years with Mary O’Dea, who was well known as a hard woman.

“He’d the face of a rogue on him,” said James O’Dea, with conviction. He sat by the fire smoking impassively.

“So ye sint him on to me—success to ye,” observed Mrs. Clancy easily. “Well, the dour’s shut an’ locked, and he’ll be back to ye. Faix, times, there’s some do be without the price of a brekfast, an’ they gits it; but, afther all, am I poorer at the ind of the year for a bit of bread an’ a sup of tay? I know ye’r cleverness, Mary; but, sure, I lives.”

Mrs. O’Dea sniffed heavily, clattering cups and saucers.

Outside, rain fell in the village of Abbeyduff—a thin, exhausted mist, clinging with chill, emaciated fingers to the skirts of a cold night.

The sky was dim and dreary, an unbroken mass of grey, moving sullenly. Here and there pools glittered where lights from open doors fell on them; dejected dokeys brayed heavenward—further prophecy of bad weather.

In O’Dea’s public-house it was warm and bright; the family sat in a low-roofed kitchen, where a big turf fire glowed, the light falling on polished glass and china; the dim roof

was hung with bacon and strings of onions. In the bar beyond, Katie O’Dea, acclimatised to an atmosphere suffering from overcrowding, which reeked with porter and bad whiskey and worse tobaccos, served drinks to various dripping men with much indifferent repartee thrown in. Katie was a local beauty, who could afford to be rude if she chose. Her coarse, black hair was puffed out in a ludicrous following of fashion, and her red hands emerged from lace-bedecked sleeves. Old friends drifted through the bar into the warmer kitchen, gathering round the fire.

“James is that positive.” Mrs. O’Dea hung the kettle on the sooty hook, and remarked that “’twas on bilin’.” “‘He has the face of a rogue,’ says James, says he, bawlin’ it into me ear, and packs the crayture off; an’ ’twould be the cute one, I’d tell ye, would get the betther ov Mary O’Dea.”

“They couldn’t shmell the taypot here without showin’ the money,” said James stolidly, “but I sint this wan off.”

“Nivir did I make a mistake yit in judgin’ man or baste,” snapped his wife, bustling to a glass-fronted cupboard to take out butter and sugar, “save, maybe, whin I took James, here.”

The audience laughed softly.

James O’Dea shifted his pipe from the left side of his mouth to right, and spat with emphasis.

“There was the matther of thim turkeys,” he said slowly.

“Oh, Heaven, kape ye’r mem’ry green,” shot out his wife sharply.

James put his pipe back to its more familiar side.

“A fancy the wife had to huxster fowl,” he went on placidly, “an’ to buy a cart-load for Tullown market; so awa’ wid her to make a fortin’, the price of a nate little pig in her pocket, she having wheedled it from me. Well, she wint far, and comes back in the dark, pleasant an’ happy, with her full of thim; an’, faix, I heard nothin’ for the evenin’ but how she was to git fifteen shillin’ a couple—no less—next day in the market, havin’ paid but tin. But, sure, whin I git up in the mornin’ to help her—I recalls that ’twas freezing, an’ I near to fall—



“‘Nivir did I make a mistake yit in judgin' man or baste!’ snapped his wife.”

didn't I see 'twas ould hins she had ; ould crabs, five year an' more, that they sould to her in the dusk ; an' glad I was to see thirty-five shillin' back for the crowd. Indade, the pig, the crature, little knew the loss he went to."

The audience now laughed mercilessly, while Mary O'Dea, very red in the face, clattered at the cupboard.

"An' I a shlip of a girl," she said indignantly. "'Twas the youngness did it."

James remarked thoughtfully that "she'd minded that." "An' there was the matther of Malone's ass," he began, "an' Susie Dayly that lifted the sixpence"; but here he caught his wife's eye and desisted.

"I towld ye he'd be back," said Mrs. Clancy suddenly.

Someone looked in. A smooth-faced young fellow of between twenty and twenty-five, with sodden, shabby clothes, and sockless feet thrust into patched boots. A pack hung to his back, and his trade was further demonstrated by an inch tape and pair of scissors hung round his neck.

"The door was shut against me," he said, in a mincing Dublin accent. "So I returned. Maybe ye can arrange for me, after all."

Mrs. O'Dea swung her great form to the front of things.

"That's right," she said. "I was out, an' me man here takes no one without me. 'Tis 1/6 here for a night's lodgin' an' ye'r sup of tay. Money paid to me now. No credit."

The young tailor's face fell ; he hesitated and looked out at the bitter night. Lines of fatigue and hunger were drawn on his thin face. With numbed fingers he began to search his pockets. A shilling, a three-penny bit, a greasy penny, and finally two stamps, were produced by degrees and eyed wistfully. "The last," he said. Mary O'Dea bit the shilling and swept the money away.

"That'll do," she said briefly. "Them that pays can rest. Let ye take a sate be the fire now an' dhry yerself. 'Twill be extry, of coorse, for ye'r brekfast in the mornin', or for an egg or bit of bacon."

The tailor sighed and turned to the fire.

"'Tis the last pinny he has in the world," said kindly Mrs. Clancy to a friend. "Look at the face of him. Isn't it the hard woman she is."

The young man, having intimated that his name was Patsy Dayly, stretched thin fingers to the blaze and in his mincing voice informed them that trade was bad entirely. He was broke where he was down at Clahir an' was trampin' to Dublin to get a sure job,

Dublin being his birthplace. He then signified his willingness to make a suit for any man who would buy the stuff from his pack, for five shillings, and opening his bundle displayed a couple of lengths of such vile material that even the men of Abbey-duff detected its worthlessness and shook their unbrushed heads. His one sale was a card of buttons to fat Mrs. Clancy, for which she paid twopence. Dayly shut up his pack and stared hungrily at the tea-table.

The kettle had ceased to sing and was spluttering and spitting from its narrow black mouth ; the brown pot stood heating in the ashes, flanked by half-a-dozen potatoes left over from dinner. A loaf, a slab of butter, and a basin of sugar stood on the clean white cloth. The callers gave a kindly "Good evening" as they slouched out. Mrs. Clancy, much pressed and having always intended to remain, shook out her shawl and wiped her hands on her skirt ere she sat down. She and Mary O'Dea were enemies who could never live apart.

"A dacent, quiet boy," whispered Mary to her, as she filled the teapot, "though maybe short of money, an' James here turnin' him out. I dare say, now, if he was to go to ye, ye'd having given him tay for nothing, seein' the thin face of him."

"Seein' him puttin' out his last pinny, maybe I would," observed Honor Clancy drily, sitting down to the meal.

Patsy Dayly, tired as he was, tried to win his landlady's heart by helping her to lift the potatoes, telling them in a voice thin with exhaustion that he'd thramped sivinteen mile that day with but a bit of bread inside him.

"If it wasn't that 'twould break the tally I have for market to-morry, I'd give ye an egg," observed Mary O'Dea, with vague kindness.

James O'Dea put his pipe in his pocket ; Mrs. Clancy smiled.

With stern hands Mrs. O'Dea measured her lodger's portion of the loaf and allotted him a tiny slab of yellow margarine and one potato. These she handed to him with a glance which forbad further demand. But his tea was hot and strong, and he drank it greedily.

"Talkin' of eggs"—Honor Clancy raised a smiling face from her cup—"there's three in the blue bowl that Katie brought in late, and can't be counted for the market, so you can spare them. 'Twas well I happened to see thim same. James here 'd take one, too."

With a weak smile and bitter brow, Mary



O'Dea rose to find the eggs and put them into a saucepan with a sacrificial air. James winked gently, and Honor Clancy unmoved praised the strong tea and good butter, till her hostess's brow unbent. Dayly the lodger, however, caught her kindly eye and smiled suddenly; he was eating wolfishly. But though he left his plate bare and chased the crumbs round it with a damp finger, he was offered no more. Mrs. O'Dea knew how to keep her lodgers down. If he had chosen to pay an extra threepence, she would have given him unlimited bread and two slices of white American bacon. It fell to Mrs. Clancy to push away absently an untouched soda cake and remark *sotto voce* that he might as well ate it.

It rained on outside—a bitter, dreary evening. When tea was over, more loungers strolled in to gossip and drink. The tailor went out to them, spending his buttons price on a pint of porter and flirting with his Dublin accent with pretty Katie. Even distant London was not unknown to him. The local beauty was so clearly impressed that Tom Carmody, who wished to marry her, felt black murder well up in his heart.

In the warm kitchen Mary O'Dea, very red in the face after her hearty meal, took occasion to reiterate how she "tuk the man in to lodge, nivr havin' been mistaken yit about man or baste," and "takin' good care she wasn't." Here she locked tea, bread, and butter away in the cupboard, lest some hungry lodger might steal down in the night.

"Not that I'm afeard of this honest little felly," she added, as she drained the tea off the leaves and put them in a saucepan to dry to supply the lodger's morning tea.

Dayly came in presently, a roll of newspapers in his hand. He asked for a candle to read them by, for he had, he said, some advertisements to answer, and was told it was a pinny extra for light, no sane man wanting to see his way to bed.

He'd pay in the morning, he said, when he had his breakfast, and after a moment's hesitation, got his light and left, his last glance at his landlady lacking cordiality.

Peace fell on the house of O'Dea, but Mrs. Clancy, kept awake by a sick child, was surprised to see a point of light gleam all night from one of the narrow windows set in the thatched roof. It was the lodger's part of the house.

The household were early astir. It was yet the cold grey of a winter's dawning when James went forth to feed pigs and cows, and Katie, muffled in a shawl, went out to milk.

Mrs. O'Dea raked the warm turf ashes together, blowing them till they glowed and the fresh fuel caught. She opened the back door to let in some air, for the smell from the bar clung heavily.

Patsy Dayly, looking white and wretched, came down pack in hand and bid them "Good day."

"Will ye have a slice of bacon with yer breakfast?" demanded his landlady sharply. "We all takes it."

But Patsy the tailor bent a shamed head.

"To tell ye thruth, missis," he said, "I want to kape the few pince that's on me for the road." (None knowing better than he that those pence were nowhere.) "I'd not ask a bit in charity—" Here Mary O'Dea set her mouth grimly, and there was a flicker of humour in the tailor's face as he eyed her. "But"—he unstrapped his pack—"I bought some shtuff very chape lasht week and made it up into things, and if ye'd buy them, ma'am, I could give ye a bargain, have me breakfast, and go. Bits of under-things," he added, laying some garments on the table and turning modestly aside.

Mary O'Dea pounced upon them. A hungry man drove easy bargains. There were two shifts of good strong calico, fashioned with more roominess than taste, but decorated with some hand-made crochet edging, an under petticoat of home-made flannel, and a man's waistcoat of the same material fastened with gaudy buttons.

Katie, coming in with her foaming tankard, ran to look, and conjured up a fleeting blush.

"Hand done, ma," she whispered, as she fingered the crochet on the shifts. "The same pattrn they taught us at the convent."

Mrs. O'Dea handled and disparaged; the tailor over his shoulder recommended his goods. Mrs. O'Dea held the petticoat up to her ample form, measured the shifts upon the resisting Katie, and made an offer. The materials were all solid and durable. The offer, of course, was a low one, but she presently advanced it a little, proffering eggs and bacon free for breakfast if it was accepted. Dayly hesitated no longer; he took the small sum of money, while Mrs. O'Dea put the things aside, and boiled eggs and fried bacon with an unusually liberal hand—she knew she had driven a hard bargain. The tailor ate greedily, gulping down hot tea and slices of flabby, high-tasting bacon. The eggs and bread he put in his pocket, keeping them all the time absorbed by his flow of conversation. He rose, looking better.



"Mrs. O'Dea handled and disparaged; the tailor over his shoulder recommended his goods."

"Heaven save ye, ma'am, for a generous lady," he said, as Katie helped him on with his pack. "I have afar to go, and I didn't sleep much. I hope the things will please ye. But fer yer goodness, I'd nivir have let ye have them." Then he vanished.

Mrs. Clancy, measure in hand, came across for her morning's milk she bought from the O'Deas.

"What ails the little tailor," she asked, "that he's makin' the road as if the devil was forkin' his heels? He past me house at the throt, and threw Deely, that was playin' at the dour, a card of coloured buttons."

"The devil an' all ails him," sniffed Mary O'Dea, as she measured the new milk. "I towld ye was dacent an' not so poor." Here she lifted up her purchase proudly. "See here," she said, showing them and telling the price.

Honor Clancy fingered them curiously.

"Quare ways for a boy to be stitchin' thim soort of things," she said dubiously. "'Tis hardly dacent like. And did he give thim to ye for that price?"

"Hunger driv him. If he was with you, I suppose he'd have got what he'd ask an' a free brukfast. He nivir even bought the shuffls for the couple of shillin's."

Katie, yawning audibly, took out her leaden hair curlers, and remarked that "whin she'd the lodger's room done, she'd get a dhrop of hot wather to wash her face."

James O'Dea appeared at the door. He looked at the remains of breakfast.

"Did he get the bit an' make off?" he said, grinning. "Faix, I seen him peltin' down th' road like a sphurred horse."

Mrs. O'Dea, having expressed an urgent wish that Heaven might send him and Honor Clancy sinse, asked angrily if he had "iver seen Mary O'Dea give bite or sup without seeing the money for it," and again showed her purchases.

James took up the waistcoat and put it round him.

"Ye'd think he measured me," he remarked. "I'm glad to git it. 'Tis the shuffl ye spin yourself, Mary, for the blankets. Well, ye did right to get thim."

Mrs. Clancy took up her milk, but dropped it again as a skirling wail of despair rang through the house.

"Katie has a wakeness got," she gasped, unheeding the white liquid pouring across her feet. She dashed for the narrow staircase, flying fast to the summoning yells of "Ma! ma!"

"Mighty strong she's bawlin' if 'tis a

wakeness she has," said James, as the women shoved him aside.

What a scene met their eyes as they ran into the little bedroom, with its sloping roof and dry, musty smell! The small windows were not made to open. Katie, scarlet-cheeked, leant against the table, tears ran down her unwashed cheek. She beat the air with helpless hands and wailed unceasingly.

"Oh, ma!" she cried; "the crochet mats I did meself at the convent ripped to tatters an' gone, an' not a taste of the candle, an' the room littered with shcraps an'—— Oh! his shifts—no less."

"What ails ye?" cried her mother, as she came in, unable to grasp what it all meant. The floor was covered with shreds and scraps; the candle was a memory in its porter bottle.

Then Mrs. O'Dea ran to the heaped-up bed, and knew. Below the patchwork counterpane were the remnants of her strong twill sheets, her homespun blankets. They were cut and sliced remorselessly, but a scrap or two remained. Patsy Dayly had used his wits and his landlady's goods to procure his breakfast and get back his money. Mary O'Dea had paid in kind and cash for her own goods hastily fashioned by the light of her own candle into the garments downstairs.

"Me little mats that took me two months to do!" wept Katie.

"Me blankets—me sheets that I saved the egg money for for two months!" shrieked Mary O'Dea, awakening to the flood of misfortune which poured over her. "That little felly with his assurance."

"I declare to Hivin," she wailed, "if I was to wear that underskirt, 'twould give me a chill to me legs, knowing how I come by it."

Then her husband's grinning face, the loss of her bedding, and the knowledge of her folly being laid bare before Honor Clancy, were too much for Mrs. O'Dea; she sat down and wept bitterly, gathering up scraps of her sheets and blankets with tender hands.

"Bawled for the dear life," James O'Dea recounted that evening. His wife was not visible, and his audience laughed happily. "Divil a softy at all was that little tailor. Didn't I always mistrust him, an' he was off with two shillin's an' a warm breakfast. What's more, with the price of the eggs that was in thim sheets."

"Turkeys an' tailors," he added, stroking his new waistcoat, which he wore proudly, "there was nivir a woman yet could judge either of thim."

Mrs. Clancy remembered the present of buttons flung to Deely, and wondered.



THE FIRST KNOWN REPRESENTATION OF HALLEY'S COMET: ITS APPEARANCE TO HAROLD BEFORE THE NORMAN INVASION OF ENGLAND, AS DEPICTED IN THE BAYEUX TAPESTRY.

## THE COMING COMET.

BY H. C. O'NEILL.

A PRIVILEGED few have seen at the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, a tiny, fluffy spot on a photographic plate which represents the first photograph ever taken of one of the most fascinating bodies in the solar system. It is a photograph of Halley's Comet, which was taken on September 9, 1909. For two years photographic plates had been exposed in huge telescopes all over the world in the hope of finding this dazzling comet after its journey of seventy-five years past the orbit of the most distant planet, Neptune. Other comets have been more brilliant. Donati's Comet in 1858 spread its tail scimitar-like over a third of the visible heavens. But no other comet is so famous. At intervals of from seventy-four to seventy-nine years it has appeared in the heavens from long before the Christian era. Its successive appearances have been traced as far back as 240 B.C., and no term can be put to its life in that direction, whatever the future may have in store.

The history of Halley's Comet is bound up with much of the world's present knowledge of these bodies. Although there is evidence that the planetary nature of comets was known to the Chaldeans, and that Seneca recommended astronomers to study their appearances that so their periods might be ascertained, it was Sir Isaac Newton who first laid the scientific basis for such an assumption. From the law of

gravitation he deduced the elliptical paths of the planets, and from observations of a great comet in 1680 he came to the conclusion that it, too, acknowledged obedience to the sun's attraction and travelled in a similar path.

It was at this point that Edmund Halley, a famous Astronomer Royal, entered into the history of cometary astronomy, and thereby gave his name to the historic comet. Halley, who was a devoted disciple of Newton, collected the records of a number of comets in order to calculate their paths. In the progress of his work he came to the conclusion that the records of three of the comets, appearing in 1531, 1607, and 1682, referred to the same body, and he prophesied its return in 1758. Before his death, in 1742, he wrote: "Wherefore, if it should return, according to our prediction about the year 1758, impartial posterity will not refuse to acknowledge that this was first discovered by an Englishman."

As Halley prophesied, the comet returned, and was first observed on Christmas Day, 1758, and as the British astronomer thus first identified it and determined the length of its course, his name has since been associated with it.

Yet knowledge of comets, and of any particular comet, was but in its infancy when Halley lived and worked. It has not ripened to maturity even now; but sufficient is known to show that while Halley reasoned

correctly as to the identity of the comet, he was quite wrong in other of his conclusions. Halley called the comet "the Mercury of comets," thinking that it was the comet with the shortest period. This is now known to be very far from the truth. Encke's Comet, which is visible to the naked eye, but not conspicuous, sweeps through the heavens to its perihelion (nearest point to the sun) once every three and a third years. Another inference in which the famous Astronomer Royal was wrong was that, as this comet returned to perihelion again after a journey in space, so also would all other comets. It is now generally admitted that a comet may at times pass round the sun, only to fly off again into space, never to reappear. A number of comets are known which, as far as observers can tell, have never

passed forth from human knowledge. These are the barren facts of the case. Meteor showers were observed in the path it should have followed had it reappeared, and it has been suggested that the romantic comet had broken asunder into these elements. But nothing further is actually known.

Several other comets have been visible sufficiently long to have their paths calculated and the date of their return forecast. But they have not reappeared, and history knows of them no more.

To determine with precision the time and place when a comet will reappear requires very careful calculation. The comet is within human power of observation for such a small fraction of its course that it is an extraordinary tribute to the modern science of astronomy that the path can be given.

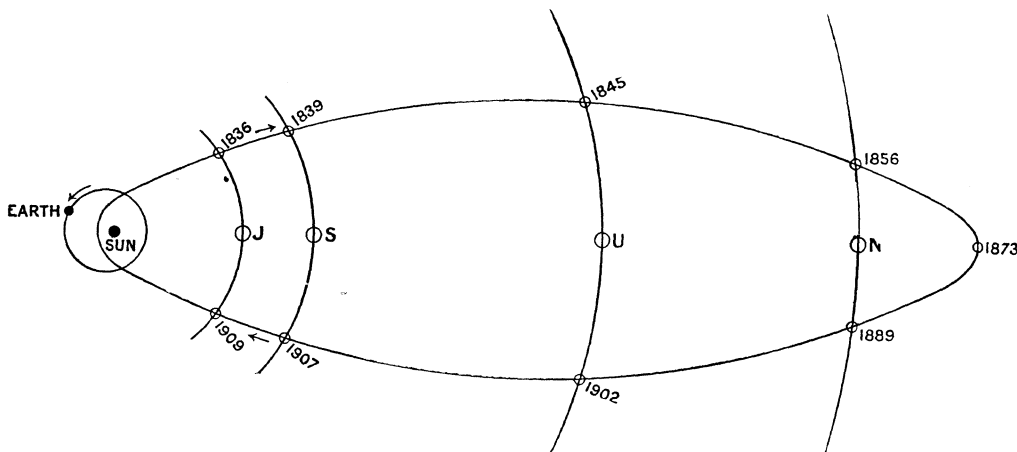


DIAGRAM SHOWING THE PRESENT COURSE OF HALLEY'S COMET IN RELATION TO THE GREATER PLANETS.

reappeared after their dawning on human eyes once or twice. They may be travelling in a parabolic curve, an unclosed path, or they may, as is suspected in some instances, have broken up and formed a shower of meteors. At least one has had such a history that it will not readily be forgotten.

A large comet appeared in 1772, and in 1805 and 1826, when Biela, an Austrian officer, found that the three appearances belonged to one comet. Twice again it returned, and then in 1846 a tiny comet was seen to break off from the parent. Some little time after a luminous thread was seen to join the two. Once again, in 1852, Biela's Comet returned and traced its path across the heavens, with a baby comet of the same shape coursing by its side. After it had been visible for three weeks, it

When Halley's Comet reappeared, it was in the almost exact position which Messrs. Cowell and Crommelin, of Greenwich Observatory, had calculated for that date from observations made on its last appearance in 1835. In that year it was visible for only two hundred and eighty-seven days—*i.e.*, little more than a hundredth of the time it takes to traverse its path.

To calculate the position, its velocity must be known, and the pull of the large heavenly bodies which it passes as it wings its way to the confines of planetary space. The giant planets Jupiter and Saturn vary slightly, but appreciably, in period, owing to their mutual attraction, and the comet passes much nearer to them than they to each other. Moreover, a small change in velocity in those distant regions would have a great effect on its period. This is the reason that the

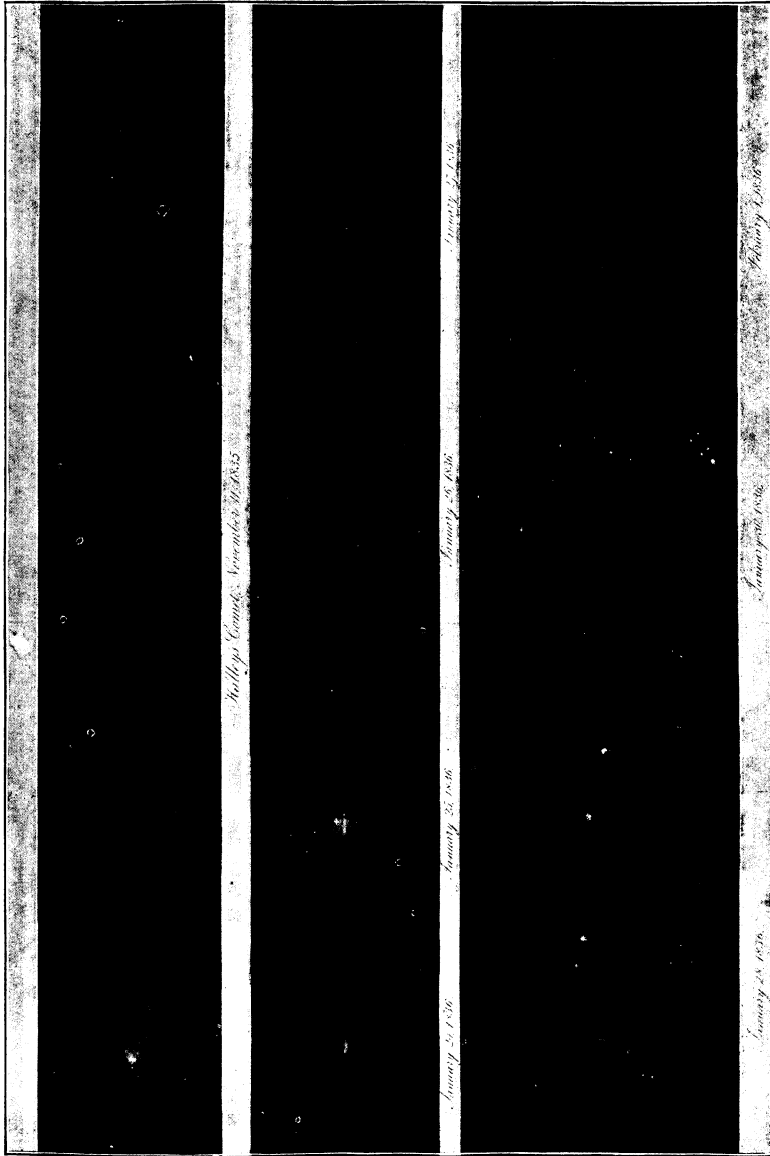
comet's period varies between seventy-four and seventy-nine years. This same planetary pull has been invoked to account for the disappearance of comets, the strong and sudden attraction having, it is suggested, drawn the comet completely out of its path and

shines with a dazzling shimmer, and yet the source of its light is a mystery. The spectroscope seems to show that cometary light is not sunlight, while the presence of reflected light is indicated by the polariscope. It is probable that part of the light is

independent, and that part comes from the sun ; but the proportions in which they are mingled are unknown.

The comet's head seems to show some strange activity. Extraordinary convulsions occur in it, and livid streams of matter are shot out in various directions with something like volcanic violence. It develops fiery brushes and horns, besides a tail, which is directed away from the sun. At times it does not seem to possess a tail, and later the fiery stream is developed.

While it is in view, it is a constant object of interest. It is almost sufficient to state



HALLEY'S COMET, 1835-36.

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captured it, putting it under fealty to a new sovereign—the disturbing planet.

Up to the present Halley's Comet has not suffered in this way. It survives as a splendid example of the problems that yet remain to be solved in astronomy. For it

the ancient classification of comets given in Pliny to make this clear. The ancients knew twelve kinds, and the principal were *Lampadias*, torch-like, *Pagonias*, bearded, *Xiphias*, sword-like, *Pitheus*, tun-like, *Ceratias*, horny, *Acontias*, resembling a



javelin, *Disceus*, quoit-like, and *Hippias*, similar to a horse's mane. All such forms may be witnessed in the evolution of one comet as it passes across the heavens, lighting like a torch, and spread like a golden film with the spangled stars showing through.

Yet this is to treat of comets on their spectacular side. Another and far less pleasing side has left its mark upon history. The scientific has ever run neck and neck with the popular view of comets, but until quite recently those who ran with the former counted but in digits, while the latter took toll of the vast majority of mankind. Comets were looked upon as portents from earliest times. Matthew of Westminster, a monkish chronicler, speaks of them as being "always the foreteller of future destruction." No comfort is to be derived from the fact

in 451, and so its various appearances might be chronicled, some event of ill-fame attaching to very many of them. The coincidence was readily magnified into a relation much more intimate, and thence comets came to be looked upon as harbingers of disaster.

The actual dates of the appearances of Halley's Comet have been traced as follows :

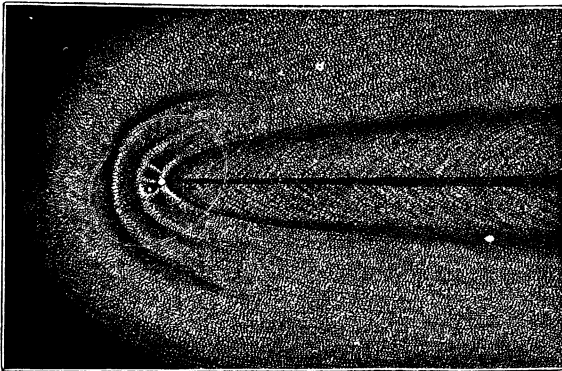
B.C.	240	A.D.	295	A.D.	837	A.D.	1378
	163		373		912		1456
	87		451		989		1531
	12		530		1066		1601
A.D.	65		607		1145		1682
	141		684		1223		1758
	218		760		1301		1835

The path which Halley's Comet has now traversed is the shortest, in point of time, in its history. It passed out of view in May, 1836, and as it was first observed photographically on September 9, 1909, it has been invisible for only seventy-three years and four months. After passing its perihelion on November 16, 1835, the comet commenced to depart on its long excursion into space. It crossed the path of Jupiter in 1836, of Saturn in 1839, of Uranus in 1845, and of Neptune at the end of 1856. The gradual retardation of its velocity will be appreciated from the figures and from the chart. The comet reached its greatest distance from the sun in 1873, and commenced its return journey. In April, 1889, it recrossed the path of Neptune; in 1902 it had reached the orbit

of Uranus; five years later it had crossed the path of Saturn; in 1909 it had passed Jupiter's course, and only a few months after it was detected photographically at Greenwich and Heidelberg.

Some of the romance of the famous comet has thus disappeared with its falling under the thralldom of the modern camera. But it is fated to be even more prosaically questioned. It has yet to pass the keen inspection of the spectroscope, one of the most modern of the handmaids of astronomy.

When Halley's Comet last appeared, the spectroscope had not been invented. The comet Morehouse, which was discovered in 1908, was found to have traces of the poisonous cyanogen gas in its filmy tail. It has been suggested that Halley's Comet may also contain traces of this deadly gas, but the thought need occasion no alarm.



DONATI'S COMET: VIEW OF THE COMA, 1858.

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that this was in the Dark Ages, for in the enlightened days of the close of the seventeenth century, Evelyn notes (1680): "They may be warnings from God, as they are commonly forerunners of His animadversions."

Halley's Comet has had a sad record in fostering this uncomfortable superstition. On its celebrated appearance in 1066, it was looked upon as an omen of the passing of Saxon England and the dominance of the Norman rule. The tradition is preserved in the famous Bayeux Tapestry, where the Saxons are shown gazing with wondering eyes upon the celestial object, while Harold sits ill at ease on his throne. In 11 B.C. it appeared before the death of Agrippa; in 65 B.C. it hung over Jerusalem, which was hastening to its fall; in A.D. 218 it shone before the death of the Emperor Macrinus; Attila's death came shortly after its appearance

Even if the comet's tail brushed the earth—a suggestion which has been made by more than one astronomer—it is too tenuous to cause any appreciable disturbance in the atmosphere. Donati's Comet of 1858, one of the most brilliant ever seen, was

on April 20, it will rush past the sun with a velocity of three to four million miles a day. Up to the present it has been observed photographically and telescopically in observatories all over the world, and soon it will be seen by the naked eye. It will be nearest



DONATI'S COMET, OCTOBER 9, 1858.

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computed to have a volume five hundred times that of the sun, yet its mass was but a fraction of that of the earth.

Halley's Comet is now hastening with a constantly increasing speed towards the sun and the earth. When it approaches perihelion

to the earth between May 20 and 21, when a distance of but fourteen or fifteen million miles will separate it from the globe. But long before that it will shine as the most brilliant object seen in the heavens for nearly a generation.

# BIANCA'S DAUGHTER.

BY JUSTUS MILES FORMAN,

Author of "The Garden of Lies," "Tommy Carteret," "The Quest," etc.

**SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.**—The two Blakes, father and son, shared most of each other's tastes and moods—for the two men had been a great deal together for some ten years after the son had left the University, and had travelled much together in remote parts of the world—and out of their very sympathy the younger man, Richard Blake, became aware that his father seemed strangely oppressed with either physical pain or mental anxiety in the midst of Mrs. Cartwright's ballroom, and this impression seemed due to the sudden pointing out of a *débutante*, a Miss Vittoria Fleming, whose rare beauty was the talk of the room. But the older man declared himself only bored, after all, and Richard speedily forgot the circumstance in the new interest of dance and conversation with the beautiful Miss Fleming, who had hitherto lived all her life at the country seat of her father. On her mother's side she was descended from a distinguished Italian family, but since that mother's death her father, Pender Fleming, had lived the life of a complete recluse, and Bianca's daughter was now entering the larger world beyond her Hampshire home for the first time. She and Richard Blake at this first meeting became conscious of some influence binding their lives together for good or ill, but on his return home from the dance, he found his father anxious to persuade him to embark with him on a long foreign cruise. He talked to his father of the dance and of the arresting beauty and rare personality of Miss Fleming, only to draw from the older man an agitated entreaty that he would not allow himself to fall in love with the girl. Simultaneously Vittoria was asking her hostess many questions about the mother whom she had never known, and, incidentally, some about her new friend. Yet neither the man nor the girl learned anything that could have explained either the distress of the elder Blake or Mrs. Dudley's reluctance to answer Vittoria's questions at all frankly.

## CHAPTER IV.

"'HE COMETH NOT,' SHE SAID."



VITTORIA'S first thought when she awoke on the following morning—or, to be accurate, at the following noon—was of her mother, the perfectly new and incredibly beautiful fairy-princess mother. And she lay for a long time in that delicious borderland between sleep and waking, and made up things about the woman who had borne her—made a picture of her, sweet and winning, infinitely tender, with "wistful eyes" (as Catharine Dudley had said).

The girl had preserved certain very child-like qualities through living much alone. Like all children, she was given to "pretending," and now she had a new and delectable theme to expand—the mother they had cheated her of—the mother who had suddenly become real and near and dear after so very long.

But from that, as she wakened more fully, her thoughts drifted by easy degrees to the evening past, and suddenly her cheeks stung with a swift warmth and her eyes opened wide.

She said aloud—

"He'll come to-day!" And, at once, as if she imagined him to be already ringing at the door, she fell into a breathless and feverish haste of preparation for the day, which left her maid, a phlegmatic woman, panting resentfully in the rear.

Blake did not come.

From close upon five until it was dressing time she waited, smiling, confident, beside the tea-table, her eyes furtively upon the door. Each time that the admirable Mallow appeared in the doorway, pressing the heavy hanging deferentially aside, and lifting his solemn tones in announcement, her heart gave a swift leap which was almost a physical pain, and she was deaf and blind to the faces and voices about her. But as the last of the people who had come in departed, and Mrs. Dudley, stifling a yawn, said: "Dear me! Half after six!" she rose, a little pale, and, without speaking, went quickly up to her own room.

There, of course, after the first flood of disappointment, something like reason came to her. So many scores of perfectly commonplace things might have kept him away!

She laughed and turned to her dressing.

"He'll come to-morrow," she said, but with all considerations admitted, was still conscious of a remaining sense of disappointment. If he had really cared, he would have let nothing keep him away.

And again he did not come.

Vittoria this time had herself better in

hand, but she went up to dress for dinner bewildered and a little dismayed. Half-way through with her toilet the thought came to her that he had never expressed any intention of coming at all. He had thanked Mrs. Dudley for her invitation, looked once into Vittoria's eyes, and gone away.

And yet in all her being she knew that their meeting had been no casual thing to him.

"I know it! I know it!" she said to herself fiercely. Unawares, she spoke aloud, and, from across the room, her maid stared curiously.

This was Wednesday. On the next day she again waited in vain, but in the evening she saw Blake at the theatre. She was with a party of people who filled two adjoining lower boxes. A new musical comedy was being played, and the house was full, but Vittoria had noticed idly during the first act that on the gangway, very near by, a single stall remained empty. With the beginning of the second act, Richard Blake occupied the seat. She had not seen him come in. He had slipped into the place after the lights of the interval were lowered and the curtain had risen.

She saw that he was quite alone, and that he did not seem very much amused or interested by the musical comedy, for though he watched the stage almost without any movement of any sort, he did not smile or applaud with the rest of the house, and it seemed to her that he even wore a very slight and constant frown. When the piece was over, he took up his hat and moved out with the throng, not looking about him, and so went from her sight.

On Saturday evening they met at a dinner-party. Blake appeared there because his host was one of the men with whom he expected later to go to Armenia—a friend of many years' standing. Certainly he would have remained away if it had occurred to him that by any possibility he might encounter Vittoria Fleming, for he was quite resolute in his determination to avoid her—the more resolute since, to his angry amazement, she continued to haunt his mind both waking and sleeping.

He arrived rather late and hurried into the drawing-room, surreptitiously slipping the card which had been given him out of its little envelope, and trying to read the name written on it as he went.

He had not managed to do this, however, by the time he reached his hostess, and so held the card in his hand, while he apologised

to her for his tardiness, and waited for a later chance. She turned away presently to greet another late comer, but said over her shoulder—

"You take in Miss Fleming, don't you? There she is, behind you!" And the man wheeled about and found himself looking into Vittoria Fleming's beautiful face.

It was as if the week had not been. The amazing potency which this girl's nearness wielded upon him seized him afresh like a gripping hand, and he was afraid and angry together, as he had been angry for the past few days, for he liked to think himself strong after the manner of men, not knowing, as women know, that weakness is strength too.

He managed, however, to pronounce the more or less sane platitudes that are appropriate to such occasions, and he was conscious that he pronounced them quite glibly enough, as he would have done through the stress of much greater emotion, and almost at once they went in to dinner. Vittoria said very little. She was waiting to see if he would not make some explanation of his failure to call—some little reference, at least, to that evening of their first meeting—some word more intimate than his commonplace civilities—some little thing to carry them on from the point of parting, to show that she was different to him from these others who smiled and chattered and seemed so contentedly at peace with the world. But Blake was very busy with his own troubles just then, and had no thought beyond them. It is probable that up to this time the girl's side of the matter had never occurred to him. As he saw it, he was fighting for what he loved best in the world, his freedom and his peace of mind, and it was not until later that he realised how Vittoria's peace of mind might also have been destroyed by that half-hour on the balcony. As men go, he was not a selfish man, and he had proved that many times during his life, as a number of people could have testified, but just now he was in the first throes of a new struggle, and the unexpected strength of the forces he had to combat amazed and bewildered him so that he was by no means himself.

He tried to talk to Miss Fleming, but his preoccupation made him inattentive and abrupt, almost surly, and after a few minutes of this, the girl, keeping her eyes down that no one might see the hurt in them, turned to the man at her other side and left Blake to his gloomy devices.

It was not a cheerful feast for either of

the two, and several times their hostess looked down the table towards them, as they sat turned a little from each other, and wondered why they did not get on. She was mildly disappointed, because she had asked Vittoria, whom she did not know at all well, for the especial purpose of interesting Richard Blake.

When at last the ladies had gone, Blake moved up at once beside his host, and the two, leaving the other men to their own devices, plunged at once into talk of their projected expedition. But later, in the drawing-room, he had again to face the girl whom he had sat beside. They came together by chance just before she left the house, and the man, it would seem, was moved by some belated scruple to attempt a sort of apology for having failed to pay his respects at Mrs. Dudley's home. He explained that he had been helping his father to start for the South Pacific, but he did not explain that that gentleman's preparations for circumnavigating the globe usually consumed less than half a day.

"And now that my father is gone," he said, "I have my own troubles to consider. Hamilton and I are off for Asia Minor next month. But I hope to give myself the pleasure of coming to see you very soon, for all that."

The girl contrived to smile politely and to say that she hoped he would manage to come, but that in any case they were sure to meet from time to time at somebody's house. And with that they parted and went their different ways, Blake morosely to his club, Vittoria, her head very high and a little flush on her cheeks, for she was beginning to be angry with herself, to her cousin's home.

An older and wiser woman would have realised that the man was paying her powers a very high compliment by trying to avoid her, and would have been pleased or not, according as she valued the compliment, but it is the tragedy of youth to be unable in matters of the heart to avail itself of anything like the reasonable common sense or the humour that it applies to the other matters of life.

Youth pays for its privileges.

\* \* \* \* \*

On the second day following this the two met again in a strange fashion. Blake had awakened on that morning with one of his very rare headaches, and, after his fashion, took it into the open air for cure. He walked up through the Park by the less

frequented paths, and, by the time he had passed the Serpentine, was free of pain and tingling pleasantly with revitalised blood. He came by chance to a spot near the bridle-path which closely skirts the water there.

A stout old gentleman, with a red face and great, bristling, white moustaches, rode past him at a canter. The hard-blowing hack threw up a shower of sand behind, but forged ahead hardly faster than at a walk—making heavy weather of it, as it were. Indeed, the pair had an effect grotesquely nautical—a bluff-bowed river-tug kicking valiantly behind a barge. Blake watched the old gentleman out of sight and laughed. Then, as he was about to go on his way, he halted, for his eye caught two mounted figures approaching at a quick trot from the south—a man and a young woman, and the woman, it seemed to him, rode extremely well—well enough to watch. The two came near, and they were Vittoria Fleming and a young man called Bellingham—Monty Bellingham to those who knew him.

Blake gave an exclamation of surprise and then of distaste, for he cordially disliked Mr. Bellingham and all his kind, and it seemed to him a pity that this young girl should be riding in the Park or, indeed, having anything to do with the Bellingham sort of person. It was not that the man could be called a monster of sin or of anything else. Most houses were open to him, and certainly he was popular among women. But the better sort of men avoided his company, and a man who is disliked by his fellow-men will bear watching. Bellingham represented a type which is familiar in all the great capitals of the world—the well-dressed and well-mannered youth of fairly assured position, who can be convicted of breaking no important social laws, but who is trusted by few people—and then only once; his instincts are, as a rule, furtively predatory.

It occurred to Blake that the two might have met by chance rather than by design, and he looked behind to see if Miss Fleming's groom might not be following. But there was no groom to be seen. In point of fact, however, he learnt, a long while after this, that the meeting had been accidental, and that Vittoria's groom was waiting at the Park gate.

The two riders passed and were shortly lost to view. Blake noted, frowning, that the man's horse was very fresh and hardly in hand, and that Vittoria was laughing at his struggles with it. She looked exceedingly well in her close-fitting habit, and rode as she



"Blake saw that the girl was unseated."



had danced—naturally, without consciousness of effort.

He watched them as they swung out of sight among the trees, and stood a little longer scowling absently at the spot where they had disappeared. Then, as he was turning to go on, he thought he heard the girl's voice again, as if they were coming back by the way they had gone, and, indeed, after a moment, the two once more broke into view. Miss Fleming was some little distance ahead, and young Bellingham hung back, fighting with his mount. What followed came very much more swiftly than it can be told. The man must completely have lost his temper and with it his reason, for Blake saw him raise his crop and strike the horse with it a side blow across the head. Of course, the animal promptly reared, plunged once, took the bit, and bolted straight forward at a tremendous pace.

Miss Fleming, checking her mare to allow the other to come up, hung diagonally across the path, and Bellingham's maddened beast cannoned full into her, swept the lighter animal aside, and was off like a whirlwind.

Blake saw that the girl was unseated and clinging half-way to the ground, saw the mare begin to rise in a first rearing plunge. When he reached the mare's head, she was plunging madly, and Vittoria was being dragged by the stirrup. She had had the sense to fold her arms round her head and face, but it seemed impossible that she would not be kicked or trampled. Blake threw his weight upon the bridle, holding close by the bit. The mare was still for a moment, and he saw the girl's foot drop from its hold and saw her roll clear. Then the frightened beast reared again, struck out at him, and broke away. He let it go and ran to the dusty, huddled heap which lay still in the path.

She said—

"I'm not hurt. Truly, I'm not hurt!" as he took her in his arms and carried her to the turf by the roadside.

"The sand was soft," she said. "I'm not hurt anywhere—only—shaken—a little." Then she saw his face and knew him, and gave a great, sobbing cry which might have been pain or might have been joy. But it had a sound of joy. Blake bent close over her, and his face was very white and hard.

"You're not hurt?" he demanded, in a sharp whisper. It was as if he could not speak aloud. "You're sure you are not hurt—anywhere?" And looking up to him

from where she lay on the green turf, she shook her head in answer.

Immediately after a very violent shock, people almost always say foolish and childish things. Vittoria asked gravely—

"How did you know I was—going to fall off—just here?" And Blake, without a smile, answered her—

"I thought you might. I thought you might." But after that neither of them seemed to think of anything more to say. The girl, it would seem, had not yet had time to wonder how he came to be there—beyond her insane question as to how he knew where she was going to fall off. She accepted him, without comment, as sent by Heaven. And so, presently, Blake began to brush the dust from her skirt with his hands, and she raised herself a little and tried to help him, but sank back again very white.

The man judged rightly that she was faint, and rose to his feet wondering how he could manage to fetch water to her. But at that moment Providence in the person of two labourers passed along the way. One of the men was in the act of restoring a flat, round bottle to his inner pocket, and the two, when they saw the girl in her dust-smear habit lying by the roadside, stopped and began to stare. Blake went down to them.

"This lady has had a bad fall from her horse," said he, "and I think she is a bit faint. Would you mind lending me your flask?"

The labouring man pulled it out of his pocket and proffered it heartily, saying—

"Sure! Sure! Take all you want, and the lady, too." They followed him back across the bridle-path and stood looking on curiously while he made Vittoria drink a few sips of the very bad whiskey. She made a face over it, and the man to whom the flask belonged laughed and said—

"Don't you care, miss! It'll do you good, no matter if it ain't champagne." Then, after hanging near for an undecided moment or two, they went on, and the two were left alone.

Vittoria could sit up now without discomfort, and between them they managed to brush her fairly free of sand and dust. But when they had done with that, she turned and looked up at him.

"You couldn't avoid me this time, could you?" she said, and she smiled a little, as if she would give the words an effect of lightness. But they were not light.

"Avoid you?" said he. "I don't——"  
 "You wouldn't come," she said. "You never came, so I had to come to you—in this brazen fashion, too!" She was still smiling, but the man stared mirthless. It was as if she had suddenly pulled aside the shrouding curtains and let him see into a room. He gave an exclamation that was a sort of cry; but the girl could not know what the cry meant, for at that moment there came the scurrying beat of horses' hoofs, and young Bellingham, his face still red and angry from his struggle, rode up, and with him a policeman, who led Vittoria's mare.

Bellingham emitted a shout of astonishment at the sight of the other man, and demanded to know how the deuce he happened to be there.

"I was walking near by," said Blake, "and saw Miss Fleming thrown. So I came to her help."

"He came and saved my life," said Vittoria sharply. "I was being dragged."

Young Bellingham, conscious of his very unheroic rôle, stammered something congratulatory and began to rail at the brute which had bolted with him—a new horse, it appeared, out of the stable for the first time since its purchase.

Blake turned away from this babble to the girl.

"You mustn't try to ride back," he said. "You're not fit. You've had a bad shaking up. You must let me send this officer for a cab. Mr. Bellingham can lead your mare to the stable." But she laughed at him, insisting that she could ride for the remainder of the day, if necessary, without feeling any the worse for it, and Bellingham pressed up to them, staring curiously.

"I don't see but she looks all right," he broke in. "She's not bruised or anything. Why shouldn't she ride?"

"Monty, don't be an ass!" said Blake angrily. "I tell you Miss Fleming has had a nasty fall, and she's not fit to ride." He asked the policeman if he would go for a cab, but Vittoria called the man back and insisted upon being put up on the now subdued and quiet mare. Young Bellingham laughed in Blake's face and swung himself into the saddle. He said, chuckling—

"Foiled—eh, what?" But Blake turned aside as if the other had not been there, and went to where Vittoria sat waiting.

"I'm sorry for trying to interfere," said he. "Doubtless you know best, but I think you'd have been wiser to go home in a cab."

The girl shook her head, smiling.

"I'm quite all right," she said. "Not in the least hurt—and I hate being fussed over."

Blake dropped his eyes and stepped back, but she put out her hand to him quickly, saying—

"Oh, please! please! I didn't mean that—not in the way it sounded. Truly! Please forgive me. I'm not ungrateful." And when he looked up again, she said—

"Will you come to see me—now?" And her face was very grave.

Blake bowed slightly, for he was foolish enough to have been a little hurt by her thoughtless words. He said—

"I shall hope to give myself that pleasure"; and then the two rode off down the bridle-path and he stood looking after them.

The policeman nodded his head, *en connaisseur*.

"That there lady can ride," he said. "Look at her now! It must 'a' taken something to spill her off." He slapped his pocket and grinned.

"The gentleman, he's a good sport, too," he confided. "He give me a sovereign for stopping his horse and catching the lady's mare."

"That sovereign," said Blake morosely, "was for stopping his own horse. This sovereign is for the lady's." The policeman grinned again and said—

"Thankee, sir! I'm in luck to-day."

Blake honestly meant to present himself that afternoon at Mrs. Dudley's, but shortly before five a message came from an elderly aunt of his—his sole living relation with the exception of his father—asking him to come to her house immediately upon a matter of importance, so that it was after half-past six when he reached his final destination, and the man at the door said the ladies had gone up to dress. Blake asked if Miss Fleming had suffered any ill effects from her fall, was told that she had not, and so went home.

And on the next morning he had to go out of town for several days.

But when Vittoria, midway through with her dressing, was informed of his call and inquiry, she halted in what she was doing and looked for a long time into the glass before her. Her hands were clenched hard and her lips tight set.

"He did it on purpose!" she said, in an angry whisper. "He came late—when he knew we'd be dressing, on purpose—so that he wouldn't see me. Well . . . that's done with!"

She beat one small hand upon the dressing-table before her.

"That's over and done with! I think we shall manage to get on without Mr. Richard Blake. . . . There seems to be a number of other people in the world."

## CHAPTER V.

### RICHARD BLAKE'S EYES ARE OPENED.

YOUNG BLAKE, when in town, was in the habit of dropping in at least once a week, and sometimes oftener, at the Harry Farings'. He had known Faring for a good many years—indeed, the two had once made an exploring expedition together in Guatemala—and he had known Faring's beautiful wife in the days of her first marriage, when she was very unhappy indeed. So he was on rather an intimate footing in the house and liked to go there. He said that the sight of two people as completely happy and as absolutely absorbed in each other as these two were could always restore his confidence in human nature, however badly it might have been damaged.

On this particular day he went rather early, hoping to find Béatrix Faring alone, but, to his disappointment, he found her talking to that grim and rather terrible old lady whom her friends called Aunt Arabella Crowley, though she was really nobody's aunt at all. Mrs. Crowley gave him a brief nod, and went on with what she had been saying as if he were not in the room. She said to Béatrix Faring—

"Well, on the whole, I dare say it's a good thing she is going back. Heaven knows what she might not do next. Nothing would astonish me." The old lady paused there, but after the pause she said—

"You didn't know her mother, of course. I did. This girl is astonishingly like her—something odd about them both—the foreign blood, doubtless."

Mrs. Faring turned to Blake and explained. "We were talking about Catharine Dudley's niece," she said. "The new beauty, Vittoria Fleming. Have you met her? Ah, yes, of course you have. Of course! I remember. She has been here this afternoon. She left not ten minutes before you came in."

Blake said: "Oh, yes, he had met Miss Fleming," and just then Aunt Arabella Crowley turned to him with a sudden exclamation. She said—

"Oh! You are Richard Blake, are you

not? I only half heard the name. Richard Blake! Bless my soul, now, that's very odd!" She stared at the young man with an intensity of gaze that seemed to have something like excitement in it, and once more, after a little, she said again: "Bless my soul, it *is* very odd." Blake wondered vaguely what was odd, but as Mrs. Crowley seemed disinclined to explain, and only stared at him in that intimidating fashion, he merely said "Yes," and Béatrix Faring came to his rescue with a question as to his recent whereabouts.

Aunt Arabella took her departure shortly after that. She had said very little more, and seemed thoughtful and silent beyond her wont. At the door, which Blake opened for her, she faced him abruptly, and said in her drill-sergeant's tone—

"Come and see me, if you'd care to. I live in Woodvale Park." She went away while he was thanking her, and he turned back across the room to his hostess. They both laughed a little, and Blake said—

"What a dreadful old woman!"

"You seem to have won her heart in some mysterious fashion," Béatrix Faring said. "Aunt Arabella very seldom asks young men to call on her. Go and see her, if you can. She's really a very sweet old soul among her friends. The Carterets adore her, you know, and so do Harry and I. Will you have some tea, or do you want what Harry calls a 'real one'? Ring, if it's the latter."

Blake said he would have tea, if he might, and sat down near by.

"It's rather odd," he said, "your happening to speak of Miss Fleming, and her having been here to-day. I was meaning to go on presently to the Dudleys'. I've been trying to call there for a long time, but something always got in the way."

Mrs. Faring shook her head.

"Well, you're too late now. She's by this time on a train bound for Mickleford. She and Catharine popped in here for just a moment on their way to the station. Vittoria is going back home, and I expect—" Mrs. Faring stopped short in the middle of her sentence, because she became aware that the man before her was regarding her with a curiously blank stare, and she even thought that he had turned pale, though men seldom perform that feat. She said quickly—

"What is it? What is the matter with you?" And at the change in her tone, Richard Blake recovered himself with a start, as people do who have been absent in mind.

"Are you unwell?" Béatrix Faring persisted. "I never saw you look like that before. You frightened me."

The man took a long breath, and after it laughed a little, but it was not a very mirthful laugh. He seemed to hesitate a long while before speaking, and his hostess made no attempt to help him out—only waited in silence. But at last he said—

"You're about the only human being, Béatrix, that I ever tell things to, or look to for—well, understanding. I'm afraid that girl's return home—I'm afraid, you know, it's rather a facer for me."

Mrs. Faring gave a low exclamation of surprise, and, after a moment, she said—

"I didn't know—I never knew."

"Well, I didn't know, either," said he. "Yes, I did! I take that back. That's not true. I knew from the very beginning, but I wouldn't confess it, even to myself. I fought it with all the strength I had. I wanted to remain free. To fall in love was the very last thing in the world I had expected or wished to do. I can't explain to you how I've always prized my freedom. It's hard for women to understand a feeling like that. Well, I knew in the very beginning that if I wanted to keep my head, I'd have to stop away from Vittoria Fleming, and so I did it by every possible means, civil or rude. I avoided her as if she'd been a disease. I think I've seen her, in all, just three times—once at a ball, once at dinner, and once riding in the Park. But those three times seem to have been three too many. . . . I don't know what I've been expecting to come of it—for I meant to call there to-day. It was a promise. I think I haven't expected anything at all. Now that she's gone—I know, at last. Now I know."

He leant forward in his chair, staring at the Sehna rug at his feet, and his hands clasped and unclasped slowly between his knees. A single vertical vein in the middle of his forehead began to stand out prominently, as if it were congested. The woman looked across at him with compassion, because she was fond of him and it hurt her to see him hurt.

"Have you any reason," she began gently, "any ground for thinking that she—Vittoria—that she cares, too? Have you any reason for believing that?"

Blake shook his head without looking up, and said—

"No! Certainly not." But then, as once before, he caught himself up, saying—

"I don't know. Perhaps that is not quite

true. I have no definite reason. That's certain, but—it's a matter of feeling—fancy. I think—I did think, perhaps. Well, I may have thought very foolish things, and doubtless I was wrong. I have no real and definite reason for believing that Vittoria Fleming ever cared a hang for me. She has a manner that is more direct, more intimate, perhaps, than girls usually have. Doubtless she has it for everyone she meets. . . .

"And still—" he said, looking down once more upon the rug at his feet. "And still——"

"Well, that's over! That's over and done with!" Oddly enough he used the very words that Vittoria had used ten days before. But Mrs. Faring made an exclamation of protest.

"Nonsense! Of course, it's not over or done with. Have you no more enterprise or courage than that? Do you mean to say that you're going to let a distance of a few miles separate you for ever from a girl you love—especially when you think she cares back? It's incredible."

"In ordinary circumstances," said he, "it would be absurd—incredible, as you say, but I feel rather oddly about it, rather fatalistic. It sounds over-fanciful, perhaps, and Heaven knows I'm not a fanciful man, but I think I was going there to-day rather as one makes a throw at dice. I had a feeling that to-day the whole thing was to decide itself, one way or the other. That's outright fatalism, isn't it? But that's how I felt. Well, you see, she has decided it herself—or Fate has, or something. She has gone beyond my reach."

Mrs. Faring frowned across at him in high disapproval.

"You talk like a silly girl," said she, "and I'm ashamed of you. If being in love has turned you into this sort of person, I'm glad you were never in love before. 'Fate,' indeed! That's nonsense."

Blake did not answer, only smiled and shook his head, and in the little pause that followed, Béatrix Faring may have had time to reflect how large a part Fate or something very like it had played in her own romantic life, for the frown went away from her brows, and when she spoke again, her voice was gentler. She said—

"I don't mean to be violent, but if you love that beautiful girl, I should hate to see you lose her unnecessarily."

"Well," he pointed out, "I can't reasonably follow her to a country house where she lives alone with a sour and morose father, can I? I'm on no such footing with her as

that. Indeed, I'm, properly speaking, on no footing at all, for I have never called at the Dudleys'. I've never even made a first call. For all I know, Miss Fleming may have forgotten my very existence. Don't you see?"

"Yes," said Béatrix Faring thoughtfully. "Yes, I see. Of course." She gave a sudden laugh of pure astonishment, and Blake stared at her.

"It is the most extraordinary thing," she cried. "The most incredible thing! I believe you're right, after all, about trusting in Fate. Only Fate is working for you and not, as you thought, against. I have only this very moment thought of something that I meant to tell you when you first came. It was in my mind when Aunt Arabella was here—indeed, she and I were discussing it, but then we began to talk about Vittoria, and I forgot. Harry has taken for the summer—only we're going abroad in July—a big old house in Hampshire that the Lees own—Arthur Lee, you know; it's a country house that has been in the Lee family for ages. Harry wants to be very, very quiet for two months, to finish a long, dull monograph on that South American mountain he climbed last year. He has promised it to some society, and they're to give him a lot of letters to put after his name. He didn't know where to go to do it, and the Lees said, why not go to this place of theirs? They haven't lived in it for years, but it has been kept in good condition by the caretakers. Well, here's the point! This house is only a few miles—two or three, I think—from the Fleming place. Vittoria and I talked about it only the other day, and she seemed to be immensely pleased at the prospect of some neighbours to play with. It's very dull for the poor child. Do you see? You're to visit us there, and have all the opportunity you want for stalking the lady! What could be better?"

"Nothing could be better," said Blake. "It's ideal. The only trouble with it is that I can't come. I'm off in a fortnight or thereabouts for Armenia. Harrison Forbes and Willie Strong and two or three others are going. I can't very well withdraw at this late hour."

Nevertheless, Mrs. Faring saw that his cheeks were flushed and that there was a light of excitement in the eyes that he turned away from hers. Protests clamoured upon the tip of her tongue, incredulous scorn at the man's lack of enterprise, but she was wise, and checked herself before she had

spoken. She was shrewdly aware that within himself arguments more potent than any she could voice were at work and would go on working.

Besides, although, like most very happily married women, she was by instinct a match-maker, she did not wish to act too boldly here. Each of them had spoken of Fate as having a hand in the relations of Richard Blake and Vittoria Fleming, but there are good Fates and evil ones. Mrs. Faring reflected upon that and held her tongue. She said only—

"I'll leave it with you to think over. My invitation holds good for any time or for all the time that we may be in the country. Come to us if you want to. We shall go down, I think, in a week or ten days. Harry is impatient to be at his work."

Blake shook his head once more with a little smile, but he did not speak, and there came between the two a brief silence. It was Mrs. Faring who broke it at last. She had really determined to leave the matter, in so far as it involved a decision, entirely in Blake's hands, but she was too womanlike to be able to resist a small, mischievous prod of the goad. She said reflectively—

"I wonder just how many young men in London will put crape on their hats to-morrow, when they learn that Vittoria has gone home. I dare say there'll be rather a regiment of them."

Blake looked up with a not very joyous "Oh!" and she laughed a little inwardly, saying—

"Oh, she has had no lack of—'suitsors,' as Jimmy Rogers calls them. You may be sure of that. Jimmy Rogers himself was among the first—that will have been long before you met her—but then he is always breaking his heart about somebody, so he doesn't count. The poor little Sailes boy counts, though, and Chalmers Le Clair and your friend Harrison Forbes and the Brooks twins. They all wanted to die for her—a long procession of them. And a lot of those horrid older men! It must have given poor Catharine Dudley some sleepless nights, I should think."

Blake said "Oh!" again rather blankly, for this was all news to him, though it was far from surprising news. He reflected, unhappily, that he really knew almost nothing of Vittoria's social career during the season just ended, for he had been going out very little altogether, and then seldom in the *débutante* class.

"Oh, I've no doubt," he said, "that Miss



"Aunt Arabella took her departure,"



Fleming was a great success. She'd be a success anywhere, I'm sure. She is very beautiful and very charming. And she's—different, somehow."

"Yes," said his hostess, nodding slowly, as if she were giving careful thought to what he had said.

"Yes, she's very different. She's not much like the other girls here. I think they felt that, and—perhaps made it a little hard for her—some of them, that is, not all, by any means. Doubtless, jealousy had a great deal to do with it, and then they felt her to be in a way an outsider, a stranger. It is hard, of course, to have a—what do you call it?—a 'dark horse' come in and win the race, you know. And Vittoria won the race easily this year. She was the hit of the season. . . . Yes, she's different. It's a matter of temperament. I don't pretend to understand her altogether, but I've grown fonder of her in these few months than of any girl I ever knew. She has—so much to give, and she gives it so splendidly! . . . She demands a great deal, too, of course—you'll have seen that. I don't mean from her friends, but of the world, of life. She's so tragically eager for happiness that she often frightens me. Too eager. Think how badly she might let life hurt her. I suppose it all comes from having lived alone, in a sort of tomb, for so very long."

"I think it comes from something deeper than that," Blake said. "I think it comes from inside. It's temperamental." And Mrs. Faring said—

"Yes, I dare say you're right." She broke into a sudden laugh.

"Poor Catharine Dudley! The child has been a handful for her! Always in scrapes of some kind, and for the past ten days—Heaven knows what got into her!—she has behaved like a lunatic at large. Aunt Arabella and I were discussing some of her goings-on before you arrived to-day. Then, too, Monty Bellingham has been trailing her about, and that must have worried Catharine Dudley."

"Monty Bellingham is a rotten little bounder!" said Blake angrily. "I'm not sure one couldn't go further and say that he's a cad. Mrs. Dudley must have been insane to let that girl see him."

"I don't think Catharine had much to do with it," Béatrix Faring said. "I fancy Vittoria managed that on her own. And, after all, I suppose he is amusing. At least, Vittoria says he is."

She thought Blake had been sufficiently

harassed by this time, and so changed the subject as deftly as she could, but the man reverted to it once or twice, and was quite plainly in a very ill humour. When he found that his hostess was determined to talk no more about Vittoria Fleming, he got up to take his leave, but half-way out of the room turned back with a new thought. He said—

"What do you suppose old Mrs. Crowley meant by going into that fit of astonishment over my name? She'd been talking to you about Miss Fleming, then it suddenly occurred to her who I was. She seemed to connect the two of us in some fashion. She said it was very odd and went away quite excited."

Béatrix Faring shook her head.

"I don't know," said she. "I noticed that, too, and meant to speak to you of it. What was she saying just before? Oh! something about Vittoria's mother. Well, you never knew Vittoria's mother, did you?"

"Never even heard of her," said he. And Mrs. Faring said—

"No, of course not. She must have died when the girl was a baby. I can't think what Aunt Arabella meant, but I'm sure that it had something to do with Vittoria's mother."

## CHAPTER VI.

### INTRODUCING MESSRS. TEMPLE AND FLEMING.

MR. BEAUMONT TEMPLE has sometimes been called "the novelist of the chosen few," and there can be no doubt that the solid and profound volumes which he gives to the world, one each second year, are read by the chosen few, if they are read by anybody. The larger public, which demands amusement in its fiction, passes them respectfully by, and so it is a very good thing that Mr. Temple does not depend upon the practice of his art for a livelihood. He was, at the time with which this veracious chronicle has to do, three or four and forty, and he did not look at all as one might imagine "the novelist of the chosen few" to look. He was a square, ruddy man, with close-cut, yellow hair which was beginning to be sparse, with blue eyes which twinkled upon occasion, and with a waist-line which only constant and indefatigable effort was able to keep within proper limits. This is not at all to say that he was stout, for he was not, but stoutness

lay in wait for his old age, and Temple was resentfully aware of it.

He had a house in Hampshire, not far from Mickleford and within two miles of Standish, the Flemings' place. He had lived there more or less constantly for twenty years, but his youth and early manhood had been passed abroad, and it was a stormy and romantic youth, of which the "chosen few" knew nothing whatever. There was the white scar of a sabre cut low down on one of Mr. Temple's cheeks, and one or two people knew that the man bore other scars also from this early period, but they were inner scars and he never showed them. He never even suggested their existence, for he was the cheerfulest of all men, with wholesome out-of-door tastes. He shot and fished in the proper seasons, and he rode regularly each day—with his thoughts upon that dangerous waist-line—he played tennis with Vittoria Fleming and was invariably beaten, and occasionally he accepted an invitation for a few days' hunting. In a general summing up, however, his two chief interests might be said to be the practice of his profession and Miss Vittoria Fleming.

When that young lady reached Mickleford on her homeward journey, she found a trap ready to take her the mile and a bit from the village to Standish, and, greatly to her surprise, she found Beaumont Temple also. He had come in the trap, but he was in riding clothes, and she guessed rightly that he had ridden over to Standish from his own place, and so had been sent to the station by her father.

The girl's first thought, when she saw him standing there on the platform, was that her father was ill and that Temple had come to break the news to her. But Temple laughed at the idea.

"Pender's right as a trivet," he said. "Nothing wrong with him but an ingrowing bad disposition. I happened to be at Standish, and he asked me if I'd like to come and meet your train. In consequence, behold me!" He took her two slim hands in his big ones and pumped them up and down, beaming upon her in the absurd elder-brother fashion that he chose at times to assume.

"Oh, Miss Vittoria Fleming," he mourned dolorously, "you certainly have grown up! I knew you would. I looked forward to it, but—I take it unfriendly of you. You've grown up and now we can't play any more."

"Don't be silly, Beau!" the girl cried. "I've done nothing of the sort. Are we

going to stand here holding hands all the afternoon? The people at the train windows enjoy it, and so do I, but let's be going."

Temple sighed profoundly, put her into the waiting trap, gave the necessary orders about her luggage, and climbed to the seat beside her. She asked him once more rather anxiously about her father as they set off.

"His last letter to me sounded very unlike him," she said—"as if he were ill or worried. You're quite sure, Beau, that nothing's wrong?"

"I'm sure of nothing," said the man, "except that I'm uncommon glad to see the sun and moon and stars back at Standish once more. But as to Pender, I think he's much as usual. Surely you didn't expect him to come to the station to meet you?"

On the surface of it there seems nothing astonishing in a father taking the trouble to go a mile over good roads to meet his daughter after a separation of five months, but Vittoria laughed at an absurdity.

"Well, no," she admitted. "No, hardly that."

"That wouldn't be in the least playing up to Pender's pose," said Temple. He did not speak offensively, but as if in a sort of gentle and tolerant mockery of a very old friend.

"Pender must be the 'heavy' old man, with a strong touch of eccentricity, or he won't play. He'll take his doll and go home. I've got on with him all these long years only by accepting him in his rôle without question and without mirth. And for that matter, my dear, so have you."

The girl laughed in spite of herself, but she put her hand on the man's arm as if to check him.

"Don't, Beau!" she said. "Really, you mustn't. I know you're the one person in the world who's allowed to say anything about anybody, but you mustn't abuse poor father. He doesn't pose at all."

"Oh, doesn't he, though!" cried Temple. "He has posed so long that he wouldn't recognise himself—the real self—if the two should meet in the street. I'm not abusing him, angel child, I'm admiring him. He's a very finished artist."

"Do you mean to say," she demanded, "that father is a hypocrite? Do you mean to say that my mother's death didn't absolutely crush him and make him—what he has always been since then?" The man's face became grave.

"Well, no," said he. "No, I don't go as far as that. Without doubt it broke him

terribly. But—well, you know, I've never forgiven him for caging you up here all your life, though, Heaven knows, I've been the gainer by it. If Pender hadn't coddled his grief and admired himself in it so profoundly, you might have been having a much better time. He has no occupation to bother with; why hasn't he been taking you about the world all these twenty years and showing you beautiful things and letting you meet beautiful people? That's what I can't forgive him."

The girl turned and looked curiously into Temple's face, for he had been speaking in earnest and with more feeling than she had almost ever heard from him.

"Why, Beau dear," she said, "I didn't know you'd ever thought of that. I never did myself. Father is—well, he's father. It never occurred to me that he could do that."

"It never occurred to him, either," said Temple shortly. But again she laid her hand on his arm.

"So serious!" she mocked. "And on my very return, too! Don't let's black-guard father any more. Really, you know, I think he's very fond of me—in his undemonstrative fashion." And the man raised his eyebrows slightly.

"So you've discovered that, have you?" said he. "It's a wonder, for Pender hides it well. I'll tell you a secret. He *is* fond of you. But he'd almost rather die than admit it. Ah, well! we'll drop Pender. I expect I'm rather a brute to bedevil him to your very face, but I'm in a bad humour to-day. . . . Have you had a good time these five months?"

"Beautiful, Beau!" she cried. "Oh, beautiful! They were all so nice to me, all those lovely people, my cousin and all the rest! I've hardly slept for months. I didn't know there was so much fun in the world—balls and dinner-parties and the opera. Oh, Beau dear, *the opera!* Why did you never tell me how wonderful it is? And the other girls who came out this year, they were nice, too—some of them adorable; but, do you know—somehow—I don't think I like girls as well as other people. Some of them were—well, just the least bit catty, you know. I think I like men better."

She said that with the air of one who makes a profound discovery of great importance, and Temple roared with laughter. But the girl swept on—"And, Beau, fancy! I've found something that I've been wanting so long—so long!"

Temple looked at her sharply.

"What?" he asked, in a quick tone.

"A mother, Beau," she said. "*My* mother. My own beautiful mother! Mrs. Dudley told me about her. How sweet and lovely she was! Ah, you don't know how I've always wanted my mother!"

Temple bent his head.

"She was all that is beautiful and kind and sweet!" said he. "I have often wished that I might talk to you about her, but your father forbade it."

"He must have loved her very, very dearly," said Vittoria, in a low voice. And after a bit, the man said—

"Yes, he did—in his way."

They came to the tall gates of Standish and turned into the long drive which, between rows of lilac and laburnum, wound up to the house on the hill.

"I wonder if father will be looking out for me?" Vittoria asked.

"He will," said the man, "secretly between half-open shutters; but when you reach the house, you will find him, as usual, in his study, and he will be somewhat surprised and a little annoyed at seeing you. He'll give you a gloomy sketch of a kiss on one ear, and the household of Standish will have resumed its ancient calm. I'm going to put Pender in a book. He's unique."

Temple was in part right, but only in part. Certainly, as the trap swung round the final curve of the driveway, a shutter in the front of the house clicked with some distinctness. Certainly, also, Fleming was not at the door to welcome his daughter, and Vittoria, after greeting the ancient butler who took her down from the trap, was shown to her father's study, a great, square room, book-lined and full of shadows, looking to the north, so that it never had the genial sun. Pender Fleming awaited her there. He was not, as usual, seated in his big desk-chair, bent darkly over a book. He stood in the middle of the room leaning against the table there, a stout man with a great, pallid face and a slow, unyielding body. He had a very high and hairless brow, and his eyes, like his face, were pale, but, unlike most pale eyes, they were deep set and had always a haggard and cavernous look, as if the man slept ill. His lower lip protruded a little, and when he was displeased or was immersed in gloomy thought, he out-thrust it still more. It was an unprepossessing habit, but then he was an unprepossessing man. Yellowish white hair grew at the back and sides of his head, and he wore sparse and straggling whiskers in the early Victorian style.

Vittoria halted just inside the door, for she was never quite at ease with her father, and she was a little embarrassed now, not knowing how to approach him. He had seldom encouraged demonstrations of affection. So for a moment the two paused, facing each other, and the man who wrote novels stood apart and watched with an alert interest that had something professional about it.

He had expressed himself regarding this man to the man's daughter with more freedom than he had intended, albeit he had maintained throughout a tone of half banter, but the words he had used had but palely expressed his real feeling in the matter. He distrusted and despised Pender Fleming, and yet he saw rather a great deal of him, partly because the man really interested him more than almost anyone he had ever known, and partly for another reason not unconnected with Vittoria.

Fleming's pale face began to work strangely. He wetted his lips, and it seemed that he was trying to speak, but no sound came. After a moment he raised one hand in an odd, stiff gesture, and the hand wavered out towards the girl who stood waiting. At last he said—

"Come—child!" and Vittoria ran to him and took his face between her hands and kissed him on both cheeks.

The man who stood apart watched with keen interest, and he saw Pender Fleming's face twist again above the girl's head and a single tear gleam and drop. He saw the man's arms rise again stiffly and his hands make as if they would stroke the girl's hair, but drop again as if they did not know how. And Temple nodded to himself with an appearance of satisfaction. Indeed, in a fashion, he was satisfied, or, at least, his judgment was, for he had long had a theory that the grim and silent and bitter old man cherished under his forbidding exterior a secret passion of tenderness, a great love—or as great a love as he was capable of—for this young girl, who recalled to him the joy and the anguish, the splendour and the agony, of a deep-buried past.

Fleming released his daughter and moved a step back from her, as if he feared that she might feel tempted to renew her caress. He said—

"There—there! I am glad you're at home again, child." And something doubtless meant for a smile appeared for a brief instant upon the vast pallidity of his still face.

Vittoria turned with a little laugh to the other man.

"You see, father *was* glad to see me!" she said, and she spoke a bit nervously, as if half afraid of her little jest.

"Yes," said Temple—"yes. But he's ashamed of it already. He'll see that it never occurs again." The novelist was a privileged person in that house. He spoke as he chose, and his speeches were sometimes appalling, but on this occasion he would seem to have flicked his host unexpectedly on the raw, for Pender Fleming swung towards him, lowering savagely.

"In Heaven's name," he cried, "will you grant me no human attributes whatever?"

"Not many," said the younger man, without a smile. And after a further moment of that dark scowl, Fleming dropped his eyes.

"You're spoilt, Beau," said he. "You have no manners. Eh, well, we mustn't quarrel, we two. Get along home and change! I want you to come back for dinner. We must celebrate the child's home-coming in some fashion."

"Thank you," said Temple. "I'll come gladly. We shall be gay. My faith, we shall be feverish! Two dull old men and one beautiful but depressed young lady. Donna Vittoria will run away back to civilisation under cover of the night."

At that name Pender Fleming gave a sort of low cry and turned his back, moving away towards the window. Even the man who had spoken frowned and compressed his lips, and after a moment of hesitation, he said hastily—

"Right, then! I shall be back at eight," and went out of the room.

Vittoria followed him to the side porch and stood beside him there while his horse was being brought round.

"How did you happen to call me that, Beau?" she asked.

"It was a slip," said he, frowning still. "It was a slip. I'm sorry. I—sometimes think of you so. It was that, I expect."

"Do you think of me so, Beau?" she said gently. And the man said—

"Yes—yes!" in an absent tone.

"You've a right to it," he said. "You're a sort of princess, I suppose—at least, your house was a princely house."

"I know," said she. "Mrs. Dudley told me, but I'd almost forgotten. I've had—so many things to think of."

Temple glanced down at her sharply, but she was looking away across the hills and

did not seem disposed to explain further about the things of which she had to think. And after a moment he moved towards the steps, saying—

"Here's my nag, and I must be off. I shall see you later, of course. If your boxes have arrived, wear your newest and smartest frock for my sake. Do you realise that I have never seen you in fine feathers? You're tolerably good-looking, I take it, when you're well got up."

## CHAPTER VII.

### MR. TEMPLE BECOMES YOUNG AGAIN.

VITTORIA watched Temple ride away down the drive, and after he had disappeared from sight, turned back into the house. She would have liked to go once more to her father's study and sit down on the edge of his great writing-table and tell him what a wonderful time she had had in London. She was well aware that that was what most girls would do under the circumstances, as a natural matter, of course, for she had within the past few months learned a good deal about how normal households are conducted; and some of what she had learnt had surprised her and had left her with a little, dull, jealous ache at her heart, because her life had been so very different. That was what any of her new friends in town would do, she said, when returned from a long absence, and she wondered if she dared do it herself. She took a few steps down the hall towards her father's door and suddenly found that she could not go on. The man had held her aloof from him too long. She was tongue-tied and embarrassed in his presence.

So she turned away and went up the stairs to her own chamber. It was a big, square room looking both to the south and to the west through long French windows that opened to the floor and had little balconies outside each one. The big pieces of furniture—bed, dressing-table, high boy and such—were of heavy, old mahogany; but Vittoria had had the chairs and couches covered with bright chintz, and the walls hung with a quaint paper which matched the chintz almost perfectly. So it was a very comfortable room, indeed, spacious and light, and full of cheery colour—full also of fresh outdoor air, but with a hint of the scent of dried lavender. And nobody could ask for an atmosphere sweeter or more grateful than that.

The girl entered with the little glad smile of one home-coming to dear and familiar things. She went here and there about the chamber, touching the books on the tables, moving the chairs an unnecessary half-inch each, as, for some mysterious reason, women always do, and then she crossed to one of the open windows and stepped out upon the little balcony beyond. She was at the front of the house here, looking southward, and the winding, double sweep of the drive curved away below her to the gates, far down toward the foot of the hill. Beyond she could see the village road and the village itself, with a brown haze of smoke hanging over it veil-like in the still sunset air. Beyond the village were low hills, and, beyond those, hills again, smoky blue against the horizon. To the left from Standish another road mounted and sank over rolling ground, and, midway of it, she could see Beaumont Temple jogging along between the hedgerows, homeward bound. She waved her hand at him again, but the man's back was turned, and, besides, he was too far away to have seen.

Vittoria spoke aloud, staring out across the pleasant hills. She said rather mechanically—

"It's good to be at home again and rest. At least—I suppose I'm glad. I wonder." She gave the matter a moment's vague thought, and then all at once her cheeks flushed and she gripped her hands beside her.

"Yes, I am glad!" she cried out. "I am glad to be back here and away from it all." She remembered her enthusiastic words to Beaumont Temple, on the way from the village, and smiled over them a little bitterly, for they had been but partly true. The face of the man who had made them false came before her, as always when she was alone, and she made a little sound in her throat which was not a sob, but something near to it.

She was still hurt and angry over the man's calm neglect of her, but she pretended to herself that she was much more angry than hurt, and most of the time she believed it. She often had little arguments with herself about the matter, and, since she could not be blind to the fact that she thought about him a great deal of the time, she persuaded herself that this was because he was the only man who had ever been really rude to her. His conduct stood out very conspicuously from the conduct of all the other young or old men whom she had met in London, and that was why, she told

herself, he so often appeared in her thoughts. She argued this very earnestly and with a fine appearance of frankness, and, after it, she added that, after all, Mr. Blake had saved her life, and therefore she must be grateful to him for ever.

Of those last ten days in town, with their furious attempt to drown thought in excessive gaiety, she tried not to think at all. They remained a sort of nightmare.

"I'm glad to be back!" she said again; and she really meant it, for home and the quiet life thereof at least spelled sanctuary—*asylum*.

Her maid, a middle-aged Scotchwoman, whom she had not taken with her to London, spoke from the room behind, to say that the men were bringing the boxes up, and Vittoria turned back to see them put in place.

"I must get out something pretty for Beau to see me in," she said.

But when, two hours later, Temple entered the drawing-room at Standish unannounced, he stopped short in the doorway with a soundless cry of amazement and pleasure. The girl was standing beside a table in the centre of the room, and from above her head the mellow light of many candles—they burnt candles at Standish—fell over her. She had chosen an evening frock of pink satin, very simple, unrelieved by any other colour, its long, close-fitting lines unbroken by adornment. And she was without jewels. She had picked up a book from the table and, holding it in one hand, was reading from it by the light of the candles.

Temple, hidden in the shadow of the doorway, watched in silence. In his forty and more years he had been in many countries and had known many beautiful women, but, looking back at this moment, he could not remember that he had ever known, or even seen, one whose beauty smote him with such a swift shock of surprise and delight as did the sudden sight of Vittoria Fleming in her pink satin under the candle-light. Of course, he had long been aware that she was far more than pretty, but he had been used to seeing her in a short, corduroy skirt or a riding-habit, or at best in a very simple and unpretentious evening frock at dinner, with her black hair in a knot at the back of her neck.

There is a great gulf between such primitive simplicity and the astonishingly perfect picture which can be produced by the efforts of a skilful *modiste* and lessons in expert hairdressing—especially when a girl has the face and hair and figure of Vittoria Fleming.

She was even more beautiful than her mother had been, Temple said to himself, for she carried her splendour with a franker and—not in the disagreeable sense—a bolder air. Bianca Fleming had shrunk a little from the world. Oddly enough, splendour was the word that first came to him as it had come to Richard Blake. "An unspeakable splendour of vitality," he put it, and, like the other man, he was suddenly afraid for the girl.

But just then Vittoria looked up and saw him, and he went down the room to join her. She stroked the pink satin with a deprecatory hand.

"It was the best I had," said she. "Some of the things haven't come yet." But the man shook his head over her, saying—

"Don't pretend! You know there is nothing so good in any of the other trunks—or in the world!"

And she gave a little pleased laugh, like a child whose doll has been praised.

"Do you like it, Beau?" she asked. "Truly? Then I'm very glad, because I've always suspected you of knowing a lot about clothes, and I've always been such a frump! Oh, Beau dear, it *is* nice to have pretty things! I adore them!"

"And it's nice, too," she said calmly, "to be able to wear things with simple lines instead of being hung round like a Christmas-tree, isn't it?"

"It is," said Temple, and he was entirely unable to tell whether her speech arose from sheer *naïveté* or from a serene consciousness of her own perfection.

Then Pender Fleming came into the room, and presently they went out to dinner.

Temple's ironical forecast of that celebration was accurately borne out by fact—save, perhaps, in the matter of his reference to himself as one of the "two dull old men." He was neither old nor dull. Certainly the affair was far from gay. Fleming seemed distrait almost beyond his wont—which is putting it strongly. He had halted for a long moment, when he came into the drawing-room and saw his daughter there, and had stared at her blankly, much as Temple did, but he made no remark upon her appearance until they were at table, when he looked at her again with veiled eyes and said—

"You seem to have grown up." And after a moment he said—

"You seem to have done it rather suddenly; I must be getting old."

He had brought out, in honour of the



occasion, one of his few remaining bottles of a certain very old hock.

"As an especial treat to you, my dear Vittoria," Temple mocked, "in view of the well-known fact that no young women, and few old ones, know hock from sherry—or from Chambertin, for that matter."

They drank to her return and to her health and happiness, and Vittoria sat the while with bright eyes and a little grateful smile.

But as the dinner progressed, a strange and grotesque gaiety seemed to fall upon old Pender Fleming. It could not have been the wine, for he habitually drank a great deal more than he was drinking at this time. Neither of the other two at the table knew what was stirring him, and it is possible that Pender himself did not know; but whatever the cause may have been, it spurred him on to strange and discordant laughter over nothing at all—a laughter which was like the cawing of crows in a field—and it moved him to the fashioning of uncouth and elephantine jokes, which he seemed to think very funny indeed, and at which the other two politely smiled between exchanged glances of astonishment and alarm.

"You surpass yourself to-night, Pender," said Beaumont Temple, after one of these dire performances. "I have known you on occasion to be appreciative of my sparkling humour, but I didn't know that you set up for a wag yourself. Pender, you're a gay old dog, that you are!"

"I'm pleased over my daughter's return," said his host, cocking an eye that shone with unprecedented light.

"Look at her, Beau!" He struck his heavy hand upon the table. "She's turned out a mighty handsome woman, sir! . . . I drink to you again, my dear."

Vittoria laughed and coloured a little. She was very much amused, but also a little frightened, for she had never before known her father to be in this mood, and it alarmed her.

"A mighty handsome woman!" he said again weightily. "And I never knew. I never saw it coming. I thought she was a child till you took a hand, Beau, and made me send her to London." Temple frowned, and the girl turned upon him a look of swift astonishment, for she had never known that she owed her acceptance of Catharine Dudley's invitation to him.

"And, I suppose," grumbled the elder man—"I suppose the next thing will be marriage. Well——" He looked from his

daughter to Beaumont Temple and back again with what he doubtless considered a roguish wink, and shook his head playfully.

"Well, you two make a fine pair!" he said. "Eh?"

Temple frowned again, saying under his breath—

"Pender! Pender!" And he shot a quick side look of annoyance towards the girl. But Vittoria must have had herself very well in hand just then, for, though she usually blushed at small excuse, her cheeks at this moment bore no heightened colour.

"I take it you haven't been losing your heart in London," said Pender Fleming suddenly, in a harsh voice. "You haven't been falling in love with anybody there?" The girl looked up at him and laughed.

"If I had," she said, "I certainly shouldn't confess it to you and Beau. I'm far cleverer than that. I'm afraid you don't know much about girls, father."

The man gave a sort of inarticulate grunt and seemed to lose interest in the subject, for he sank back in his chair with bent head and lowered eyes, and began absently to finger the wineglass before him, frowning down upon it as if he were lost in thought—which was his normal bearing when at table, or, for that matter, anywhere else.

Then presently Vittoria rose, for the meal was at an end, and left the two men together. She went to the drawing-room and sipped her coffee there, but presently moved out through one of the open windows to the paved terrace which hung balcony-like above a sharp dip of hillside beneath. And she went to the outer wall of the terrace and stood with her back to the house, looking over the tree-tops and across the broad valley beyond.

It was a warm, sweet night, with summer odours of roses from the gardens near, and a soft, summer wind and summer stars above.

Steps sounded upon the brick flagging behind her, and Beaumont Temple came where she was beside the low wall.

"You didn't stay long," she said, turning to him. And he shook his head.

"No! Long enough, though. Pender has one of his silent moods. The spasm of coltishness would seem to have been too much for him. I don't wonder."

Vittoria laughed a little.

"I was almost frightened," she confessed. "He almost frightened me—it was very strange." She turned about once more and lifted her face to the warm night wind.

"What a night, Beau!" she said softly. "What a heavenly night!"

The man stirred beside her.

"Yes—yes!" he said absently, after a little. And after another pause, he said—

"Vittoria . . . Pender has . . . rather taken the words out of my mouth. He has spoilt my game by . . . by interfering. But . . . and I know I'm a very dull old party, but it appears that dull old parties can feel astonishingly like youngsters on occasion. Astonishingly! Do you think. . . ? It's nothing sudden with me, you know. I've felt it coming on for a long time, and it came hard, my dear."

The girl did not stir or speak, and after a moment, he said—

"Vittoria, Pender may have come closer than he knew when he asked you that question at dinner. You passed it off then. Will you answer it now? It's rather important. Is there anyone in London, Vittoria, or shall I go on?"

Vittoria stared up at him through the half gloom, and she did not in the least understand what he was about. If Temple had been another younger man—one of the many in London—she would have thought that he was on the point of proposing to her, but, of course, that was out of the question with Beau Temple. She imagined that he must be questioning her in his *rôle* of general adviser and father confessor, which was an old *rôle* with him, only usually he was less direct about it.

"Do you mean," she asked—"do you mean, is there anyone in London whom I—who has a claim upon me?"

Temple said: "Yes, that is what I mean."

And then she said, with an odd, an almost angry, emphasis which escaped him—

"No! No! Certainly not!"

The man took a single deep breath. After it he asked still another question—

"How old are you, my dear?" And she told him: "Twenty."

Then said he—

"I am forty-three or forty-four—I forget which—and that makes altogether too great a difference between us, but it cannot be helped. Alas! one cannot grow young again—save, it seems, in spirit. Vittoria, will you do me the very great honour of marrying me?"

She gave a sudden cry of utter amazement—almost of fear—and she drew a little way back from him, staring. Temple put out one hand to her, but she shrank away still farther, and he withdrew the hand and put

it behind him. The girl said, in a stumbling whisper—

"Wait—wait a moment, Beau! Let me think. It's—such a surprise. I don't know—"

She stood where she was, leaning against the outer wall of the terrace, for some time in silence, her hands clasped before her against her breast. The yellow light from the window fell out across her face, and Temple could see that the face was turned towards him very still and wide-eyed, but he could make out nothing from the expression of it. He began to explain.

"I repeat, child, that this is nothing new with me. It has been coming for a long time, but I wouldn't speak because—well, because you were so very young, and had had so little experience of the world—none at all, in fact. When this invitation of Mrs. Dudley's came, I was both glad and terrified—glad that you could at last have, even for a few months, a taste of the sort of life every girl has a right to—the life you've been cheated out of; terrified lest through it I lose you altogether. It was a—gamble, with most of the chances against me, but I welcomed it and made Pender let you go. I said to myself: 'If, by some Heaven-sent miracle, she comes back heart whole, then at last you will have a right to speak, because then she will be able to answer from something like a clear understanding. She'll be grown up then,' I said to myself.

"And so," said Beaumont Temple, the novelist of this chosen faw, "so here we are at last, my dear, face to face. What answer can you give me?"

The girl did not at once speak, and he went on further—

"I know under what a tremendous handicap I start the race. There's more than age alone. You have known me all your life. You've sat on my knee when you were little, and burrowed your head in my shoulder, and wept on me, and told me your troubles. I've been always a sort of second father to you, or an uncle, or a very much older brother. That's all against me. There's a lot against me. What's on the credit side? Precious little, I fear, save—love—and some understanding—and a passionate desire to take you out of this tomb, where you've been so long walled up, out into the world, that you've already had a glimpse of now. It's a good place, this world. I heartily believe that. I should like to show it all to you—all the beautiful things there are—and I should like you

to know the people who inhabit it. It's possible, Vittoria. It's just possible that I could make you happy. What d'you think?"

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE DRIVEN SHIP.

As literally and objectively as if a body of solid flesh had stepped between her and the light, the face of Richard Blake came before Vittoria's eyes and hung there against the darkness. She was, not frightened, because the manifestation was nothing novel to her. She had long had the habit, learnt perhaps from much solitude, of visualising her thoughts more vividly than most people do, and she was accustomed to seeing Richard Blake at any hour of the day or night, a very real presence between her and the physical world round about. He came to her in many guises, or—should it be said?—in many moods. Sometimes she saw him as he had been on that very first evening of all—grave-eyed, tender, sympathetic, sharing her mood, understanding what was in her mind before she could give the thought words: and sometimes he came silent, frowning, troubled, as at a certain dinner-party; and sometimes he came in cold mockery, which was odd, because the girl had never seen him like that in the flesh.

He came, or his wraith came, in mockery on this evening. His eyes looked coldly upon Vittoria Fleming. She saw him laugh at her a little, and though in these strange appearances she never heard him speak, she yet imagined him to say words that Richard Blake could never, under any conceivable circumstances, have said to any woman. She imagined him to say—

"You might as well answer 'No' to this good man who is before you, and so have done with it, for you do not love him, and you will never love him or any other man in the world but me. I do not love you and I do not want you, but I will come between you and all other men so long as you shall live, and you shall never forget me. Now answer 'Yes' to Beaumont Temple, if you dare."

It was a grotesquely absurd speech, evolved altogether out of the shaken heart and the hurt pride and the extreme bitterness of Vittoria Fleming herself, but she imagined it to come from the presence which hung in darkness before her, and through which she saw but dimly the yellow oblong of the

open window, and the white shirt-front of Beaumont Temple, and the ruddy, lighted side of his face.

She gave a little, shivering sob, and her hands, clasped still over her breast, strained together fiercely until the blood went out of the fingers. Temple thought he had distressed her, and uttered an exclamation of pity and self-rebuke. The sound of his voice, strong and familiar, loved through many years, was like the call of the bells of home through the fog to a labouring ship. It rang of peace and comforts—safety and harbour. With outspread hands she thrust aside that misty, mocking presence as if it had been an actual mist, and she took two steps forward, which brought her where the man stood in wait. She was breathing fast. Beaumont Temple caught those groping hands in his and drew them together. The girl found herself with her face hidden upon his sturdy shoulder. It was not the first time, by any means, that it had been there.

She cried his name in a small voice wet with tears, and for a long time she could say no more, but at last she looked up at him. The light was across her face, in her dark eyes, and Temple regarded her gravely. He was wiser than most men; he may have seen more than love there, may have felt something unspoken, unexplained, in the shivering that wrung her. She said—

"Beau, you know better than I. Is it what you want of me that I feel for you? How can I be sure? . . . Beau, I'm far fonder of you than of anybody else in the world. I turn to you always, by sheer instinct, for comfort, or for help, or for wisdom. I trust you utterly. With all my heart I wish— Oh, is that love, Beau?"

Even as she spoke, voices clamoured and shouted within her that it was not, but she stilled them desperately. At least, he meant shelter—light and warmth—and she was frightened to her depths. She clung to him.

The man smiled down upon her. He was very wise—or perhaps very brave—he did not attempt caresses. His arm about her shoulders held her loosely. It was the Beau Temple of old—the elder brother. He said—

"It is a great deal, my dear—more than I deserve. It will do to go on with, I think, I think I hardly expected that an old codger like me should have roused any great and romantic passion in you. If I am more to you than any other man, if you turn to me naturally, by instinct, it seems to me that I ought to be exceedingly happy and



MAURICE GREIFFENHAGEN  
1900

“You didn't stay long.”

proud. Shall we go on, then, like this for a little while? Shall we give you time to think it over—to look at me, if you find you can, in a somewhat new light? I don't want to rush you into anything, you know. I might frighten you and lose you. I want to give you time, only—only, my very dear and beautiful child, I'm growing no younger, you know. Don't make me wait too long!"

Vittoria had hidden her face once more, but he made out that she said—

"I'll say 'Yes' now, Beau, if you want me to."

It was a cruel test of him, but the man bore it. He shook his head.

"I'm not a bully," said he. "I won't hurry you. Think me over, Donna Vittoria, and see if I'll do."

He laughed over her in the dark, and patted her shoulder with his big, square hand—the same hand which wrote profound fiction, but didn't look it—again the elder brother. And presently the girl was able to laugh, too. She fell to criticising his methods of love-making.

"If I were a famous novelist," said she, "and had made countless heroes propose to countless heroines in countless eloquent phrases, I think—I think I should be able to manage something better in my own case than you have put forward to-night, Beau. You make love like an amateur. You might at least have gone down on your knees."

"Vittoria," said he, "I should look like a fool on my knees. You'd laugh till you cried—and so, after a brief space of agony, should I." He shook his head sadly.

"It's a very difficult matter, this love-making. I've read wonderfully eloquent scenes in works of fiction or poetry—maybe I've even written one or two—but, my insatiable young friend, if any man should try to say those beautiful things to any woman in real life, she'd either laugh in his face or call for the police. You just can't be poetic nowadays. People have too much sense of humour."

"Of course," said Vittoria Fleming humbly—"of course, I am very young and inexperienced, but it has always been a cherished theory of mine that people in love had no sense of humour—lost it for the time being or mislaid it. I may be wrong." But she was not; she was right, and Temple admitted it.

They sat down side by side on the wall of the terrace, and talked for the space of what may have been an hour about what had happened—little enough it was—during

Vittoria's absence, and they made plans for the future, which included a great deal of tennis and many rides, and much golf over a nine-hole course which Temple was having laid out on his own broad acres of unprofitable land. Vittoria told him about the Farings' lease of a neighbouring estate, and Temple, after a first unworthy prick of jealousy, was very glad to hear it, for it would mean a much gayer state of affairs than that somnolent countryside had known for a long time past.

"They'll be having parties, of course," said he, "though Heaven knows what they will find for their guests to do hereabouts. How Pender will love it!" Vittoria gasped at that, for her father's possible attitude had never occurred to her.

"He'll hate it, won't he?" she cried. "I'd never thought of that. How dreadful! Beau, do you suppose he'll refuse to countenance it at all—to let me—well, do my part, you know? He loathes visitors. Will he refuse to let me have people in for lunch or dinner?"

"I'll make him play up!" said Temple rashly. "Leave it to me. It will be a struggle, doubtless, but I'll make Pender behave decently. Your visit to London was an entering wedge. Just you wait and see what follows it."

He rose to his feet.

"And now I must be off. It's late. Good-night, Miss Fleming!" She gave him her hands and he kissed them lightly. But again he was wise, or brave, for he made no attempt to draw her back to those heights whereon they had stood for a little while—no more love-making. He said—

"Kiss Pender 'Good-night' for me! I'll slip away without disturbing him." So he went away into the house, and after a few moments she heard the wheels of his trap on the gravel of the drive, and listened to them until the sound was lost in the distance.

She sat still a little longer where she was, and then she too went in and closed and locked the window after her. At the foot of the stairs she hesitated, but finally turned back and went down the hall to its farther end, where Pender Fleming's study was, and she knocked on the door and went in.

Her father sat before his great, flat-topped desk, that was littered with books and papers and with writing things, and he was reading out of a leather-backed volume. He wore a green paper eye-shade with wire ends which went over his ears, as do the bows of spectacles, and he looked in it like some strange,

hitherto unknown monster—something perhaps from Mars. But at his daughter's entrance he removed this adornment, and his pale face underwent the weird, momentary distortion which passed with him for a smile. He said—

"Ah, my dear! Come to say 'Good night'? That's thoughtful of you—that's thoughtful." (It was also unusual.) The girl closed the door and came forward. The place was illuminated only by a single reading lamp, which hung low over the centre of the great table, masked above by an almost opaque shade, so that it cast a circle of yellow light. Elsewhere the room was in gloomy shadow, and the shapes of chairs or of other pieces of furniture crouched dim and grotesque in the half obscurity. Vittoria came to the edge of the circle of yellow lamp-light and halted there. The glow, reflected from the things on the big table, struck upward upon the satin of her dress and upon her arms and neck, and gleamed in her sober eyes. She must have presented a very beautiful picture to Pender Fleming as he sat still, watching her, but she must have presented or suggested to him more than that. Something obscure to her, hidden from her understanding, must have wrung the man, for Vittoria saw his face alter, grow pinched and haggard, despite its vast pallidity, and she saw her father's eyes fix themselves in a strange stare, as if they were seeing beyond this world's veil—visions very sweet or very terrible, or perhaps both together. She saw a strong shudder go over the man's heavy body from head to feet like a sudden violent chill, and a second one after that. She thought he was ill, and moved another step towards him, saying quickly—

"What is it? What is it?" But at that he made a quick movement in his chair and the odd, strained look went out of his face. He said—

"Has Beau Temple gone?" And Vittoria answered: "Yes. He has just gone." She was still a little troubled and alarmed, but she was afraid of Pender and dared not ask him if he was suffering pain. He was always very impatient about queries of that sort. She laughed suddenly.

"Beau told me to kiss you 'Good night' for him," she said, and at first her father frowned, then made one of his rare attempts at a smile—and that was twice in one evening.

"Beau has a privileged tongue," said he. "It's no good being angry with him, because he wouldn't care. . . . Have you

two—that is to say, has he—— Well, have you anything to tell me about Beau and yourself?"

Vittoria looked down upon him with some wonder, because she had never before seen her father show any embarrassment. But after a moment she said—

"Yes, I have. Beau has asked me to marry him, and I suppose I shall do it."

"You suppose?" broke in the man. "What do you mean by 'suppose'? Don't you know whether you mean to marry him or not?"

"I asked him," said Vittoria, "to give me a little time to be more sure of myself—or, I think, he suggested it himself. It was all a great surprise to me. I hadn't expected it, you know."

"No! no!" said Pender Fleming, in a sort of pacified growl. "No, I dare say not. Well, I should be glad if you'd make up your mind as quickly as you can, and make it up to marry Beaumont Temple. You won't find another like him." He seemed to realise that he was lacking a little in parental gentleness, for he seemed to make an effort to soften his tone.

"I know," said he, "that you're very young, child, and I know women like to walk round a thing, and look at it, and turn their backs on it, and pretend they never wanted it at all, before they finally pick it up. But I have set my heart on your marrying Beaumont Temple. I have hoped for a long time that it would come about. He's wise and steady, Beau is. His follies, if he ever had any, are behind him. He'll be a good husband—and, besides, he's no bad match. I don't follow such matters, but I suppose his reputation and standing as a writer are high."

"Oh, yes, indeed!" said the girl at once. "Yes, very much so." But Pender went on without heeding her—

"And since you seem to have come back from London without having formed any foolish attachment there, as I was afraid you might do——" He stopped abruptly and looked up at her with sharp eyes.

"That's true, I suppose? Eh?" And she said: "Quite true!"

Pender noted the edge in her tone—the somewhat unnecessary emphasis—but laid it to maidenly scorn (which, in a sense, it certainly was). So he went on—

"I advise you to give Beau his answer with as little delay as possible. Don't dawdle!"

"I won't keep him waiting too long,"



said she. "I'm very, very fond of him. The only question is, am I fond enough and in the right way? I dare say I am."

She bent over and kissed her father's cheek, and started to leave the room, but after a moment's hesitation, turned back. She said—

"There's something that I suppose you ought to know. I don't want to pain you by referring to it, but perhaps you ought to know. Mrs. Dudley told me about my mother. I found out that she had known her, and I asked for all she could tell me."

Pender Fleming gave a violent shiver and caught his breath. Afterwards he spoke to himself in a dry whisper, but when that was done, he cried harshly—

"What did that woman tell you? Every word! Tell me every word!"

Vittoria repeated, as well as she could, exactly what Catharine Dudley had told her, and she had an excellent memory, so that she repeated it almost word for word. She was not surprised at her father's manner, for she knew that it tried him beyond all bearing to speak of his dead wife or to hear her spoken of. She had always known that. From earliest childhood she had been taught by nurses and governesses that her

mother must never be spoken of—Pender's sacred grief respected in complete silence. She regretted having to break that long silence now, but as she had said, she thought the man ought to know what she had learnt. And she looked down upon him with sorrow, and with more sympathy than she had ever before felt for her father, and with something like a touch of awe in the face of such deathless mourning.

Pender sat silent through her explanation, silent after it, his heavy chin sunk upon his breast, so that his face was in deep shadow, and the top of his bald head, strange and moonlike, alone illuminated. He sat there quite motionless for a long time, and the girl stood before him waiting; but at last he spoke in his ordinary voice, dry and without the least expression. Vittoria had expected almost anything of him—anger, bitter reproof—perhaps (and this was a vague hope), a breaking down of that long reserve—father and daughter brought closer through a common love and a common sorrow. She had thought that much might come of it, but all that Pender Fleming said, in that dry, expressionless voice of his, was—

"Good night! Good night!" And he did not even look up.

Vittoria turned and went out of the room.

*(To be continued.)*

## IN A MOTOR-CAR.

**S**OFT as is sleep and swift as dream,  
Through shadows of memorial streets  
Splashed by the rain-pool's starlit gleam,  
Itself so strange—the motor fleets,

Fleets in a way undreamt of kings  
Long since, and whirls us home to bed,  
Confused by new luxurious things,  
Haunted by visionary dead.

All they have gone that walked with me  
Save one, who, sitting by me, lays  
A gloved loved hand on mine, for she  
Feels strange and longs for the dead days!

VICTOR PLARR.



"PRAYER ON THE BANKS OF THE NILE." BY FREDERICK GOODALL, R.A.  
*From the original in the National Gallery of British Art, photographed by J. W. McLellan.*

## THE ROMANCE OF THE ANCIENT NILE.

By H. RIDER HAGGARD.

TO us poor human beings who so sadly lack imagination, rivers, like other physical features, are interesting in proportion to their connection with our race. Even on this small planet there are mighty streams, in South America and elsewhere, of which we hear with indifference, although ten thousand, or a hundred thousand, years hence they may become hallowed to our descendants, if such still survive, by epochs of fable and of story. When, for instance, civilisations of which a record shall remain have arisen and fallen upon the upper waters of the Amazon, these will acquire more importance than they possess in our eyes to-day.

But what educated person can hear of old Nile without some stirring of the soul? Doubtless for countless millenniums it ran its

course from Central Africa to the sea with no human eye to watch it; doubtless it spread its pregnant mud upon the bordering lands, to produce, in the revolutions of the seasons, plenteous crops of wild grain and grasses that built up the frames of primeval beasts. Millions and millions of years of beasts, and then some sort of man, who first lived upon the beasts, and afterwards sowed the wild grain and kept it free from weeds, that he might reap a harvest in its season.

What sort of man? He is hidden from us in the mists of time. All we can know about him is that the Nile must have interested him as intensely as it does the *fellakeen* of 1909, since it was his source of livelihood.

Then, after more millions of years, came



THE SACRED LAKE OF KARNAK.

men of whom we do know a little, since we have found their bodies lying in cavities of rocks roofed with a flat stone. Fair-haired men, strange to say, of whom we may meet the like in the streets of modern London. We can tell nothing about them except that they dwelt by the Nile, chose its banks for their graves, and already, so ancient is that faith, believed in a future for mankind, since with them were interred the weapons of stone that should protect them in some spiritual existence, and the food to stay their hunger upon this long journey. Old Nile saw them come and old Nile saw them pass, ten or twenty thousand years ago ; it does not matter which, and none can be certain, for bodies last well in that climate, which probably is much the same as it has always been since climates settled down into their modern stride.

Then came a race of whom we have record, a race of yesterday in the world's almanac, but who, when we first meet them about forty centuries before the birth of Christ, were

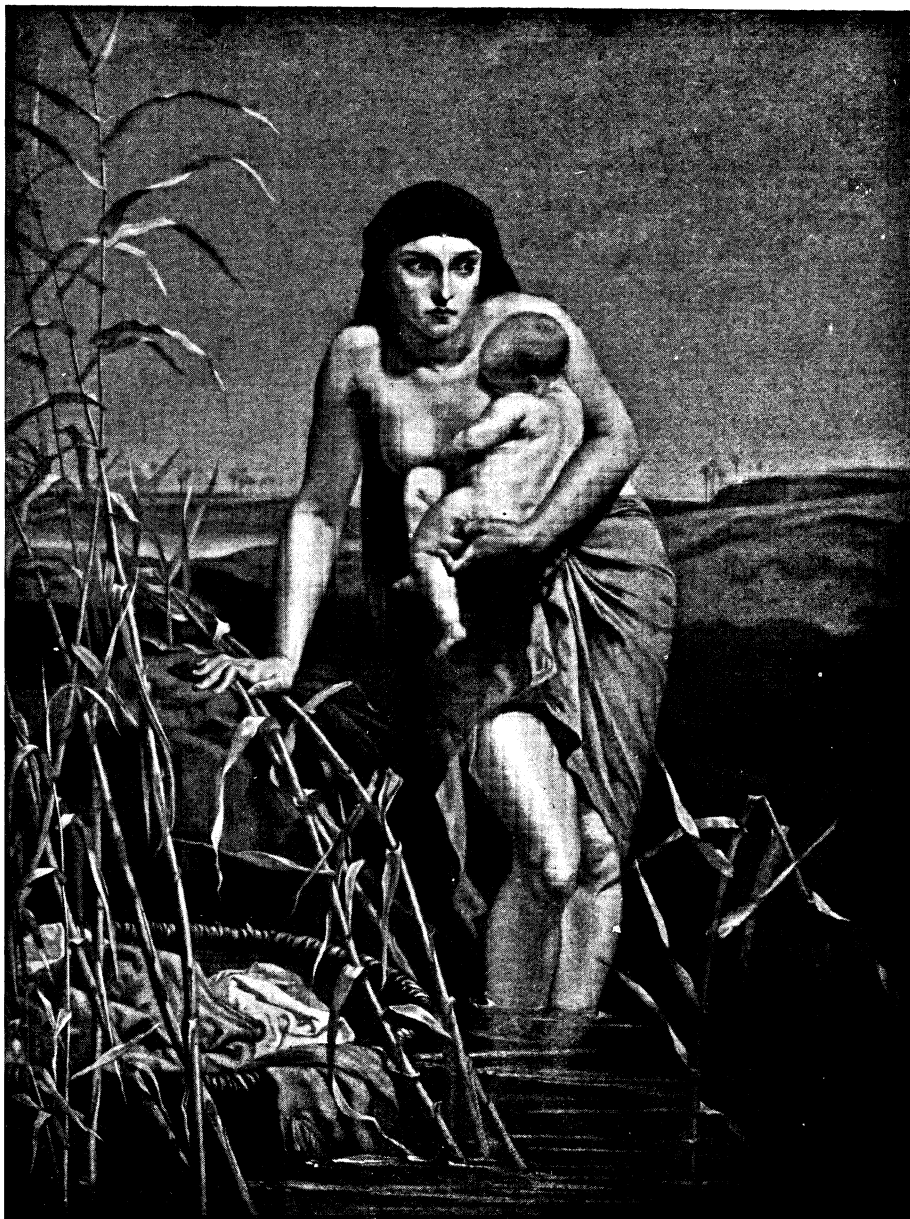
already highly developed, since from that date on their art shows not advance, but decadence, whilst their religion, which from its complexity must have been very slowly evolved, in its leading essentials remained unchanged.

Then, as now, the Nile was Egypt and Egypt was the Nile, for without the river in that rainless land no people could have lived. So it came about that Hapi, as they called it, was an integral part of the existence of every one of them. To begin with, it was a god—indeed, the father of gods—of whom it was said that if he perished, the other gods must fall and men would disappear, as undoubtedly they would have done—from Egypt. Then from birth till death the great grey stream was always before their eyes, and the sound of its lapping waters never left their ears. They saw it turn green in June and red in August ; they saw it rise in autumn and inundate the land, and sink again in spring and summer to its appointed banks. From its shallows they drew their



RAMESSEUM.

*From photographs in the collection of Mr. Herbert Ingram.*



"THE INFANT MOSES COMMITTED TO THE WATERS OF THE NILE BY HIS MOTHER, JOCHABED."  
BY FREDERICK GOODALL, R.A.

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publishers of the large plate.*

supplies of fish, and in its swamps they hunted wild-fowl or killed them with their arrows and throwing clubs. It was their great highway by which they travelled north and south; from it they even drew their metaphors.

Thus the Prince Tefibi, who lived in

the Ninth Dynasty, addressed those who in after ages would look upon his tomb, in these words: "O ye living, O ye who are upon earth, children who shall be born; those who shall sail down stream, those who shall sail up stream"—that is, those who shall travel the road of being as typified by

the Nile. Again, he describes himself as having been "a Nile for his people"—that is, a source of wealth and abundance. A thousand years or so later another king gives himself the title of "a full Nile every day, making Egypt live," for then, as now, it was the full Nile that made Egypt live and brought wealth to her inhabitants—a fact which these recognised so clearly that they are said—although I have never been able to discover the authority for the tale—to have sacrificed a virgin every year in order to

their race endured so long. Then at last he died and was buried near its banks, but above the line of inundation, and went, as his faith told him, to a country through which the sun travelled at night, where the soil was even more productive, and the ripe grain, that his magic servants reaped on his behalf, grew to a height unknown on earth.

But if the Nile was so much to the private citizen, it was far more to the mighty monarchs of old Egypt. Up and down its



KOM OMBO.

*From a photograph in the collection of Mr. Herbert Ingram.*

secure by a gift of blood the ample flooding of the land.

So the old inhabitant of Egypt lived out his happy days, for, on the whole, they seem to have been very happy, in his house fashioned of Nile mud. When the inundation went down and his fields appeared again, he scattered his seed and watched it grow in the hot soil almost as fast as the Indian's magic tree. He reaped his rich harvest, he pastured his cattle. He became wealthy by the gift of the river, for the old Egyptians were agriculturists, and that is why

waters these made their triumphal progresses, seated in splendid barges that shone with gold. From white-walled Memphis, or Thebes of a Hundred Gates, went forth the navies of Thotmes or of Rameses to subdue the Syrian nations. Forth they went with pride, and back they returned with glory—or so say the court chroniclers, who appear to have neglected to set out the occasions of defeat.

Moreover, then, as now, peace had its triumphs as well as war. Thus, as the carvings on the temples at Der-el-Bahari



"ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA." BY SIR LAURENCE ALMA-TADEMA, R.A.

*Reproduced by permission of the Berlin Photographic Company, New Bond Street, W.*



show us, Hat-she-pu, the great queen, who amongst other peculiarities dressed herself like a man, sent her fleet down the Nile from Thebes to Punt, or "God's-land"—that is, some undefined territory in Africa. The reader may suggest that this was an impossibility, unless he happens to remember that the Suez Canal, upon which we pride ourselves so highly, is not modern in idea. More than 2,000 years ago—and probably much earlier, since Strabo talks of "the canal cut by Sesostri before the Trojan times"—there was a waterway running from the Nile in the neighbourhood of Bubastes in Lower Egypt to the Red Sea, which Darius re-dug or cleared out and one of the Ptolemys supplied with locks. Also it may be added that the Emperor Trajan cut another such canal which had its starting point at Cairo.

Down this first canal evidently sailed the fleet of Hatshepu, since the same vessels are depicted on the Nile and in the Red Sea,

and on her temple walls appears the picture of their transport in a boat which, it is calculated, must have measured two hundred and seventy feet in length by ninety feet in breadth; that is towed by barges arranged in a threefold row. It was the existence of this great highway of the river that alone made possible such colossal works; indeed, all the blocks of which the pyramids were built are said to have been floated to their ultimate site in the time of inundation.

Again, when neither war, pomp, agriculture, commerce nor monuments were in question, the kings of Egypt made use of the Nile for the purpose of their pleasure. Thus, in Baufra's tale, the narrator tells how King Seneferu, seeking some new thing, like Solomon after him, went down to the river, or a lake or canal connected with it, and there met with magic and adventure.

"Bring me twenty oars of ebony inlaid with gold, and bring me twenty maidens,



PHILÆ AS IT WAS BEFORE THE DAM WAS MADE.

*From a photograph in the collection of Mr. Herbert Ingram.*

while of land portorage of the rich cargo there is no mention. It was a great cargo. Says the inscription over the vessels: "The loading of the ships very heavily with marbles of the country of Punt; all goodly fragrant woods of God's land, heaps of myrrh resin, with fresh myrrh trees, with ebony and pure ivory, with green gold of Emu, with cinnamon wood, with eye-cosmetic, with apes, monkeys, dogs, and with skins of the southern panther, with natives and their children. Never was the like of this brought for any king who had been since the beginning."

This same queen it was who, like so many of those who went before and followed after her, made use of the Nile for yet another purpose—namely, the transport of the vast granite blocks and obelisks cut out of the quarries at Assouan that were to minister—and, indeed, as it proves, have ministered—to her everlasting glory. One of these obelisks, the largest in Egypt, for it is nearly one hundred feet high, still stands at Karnak,

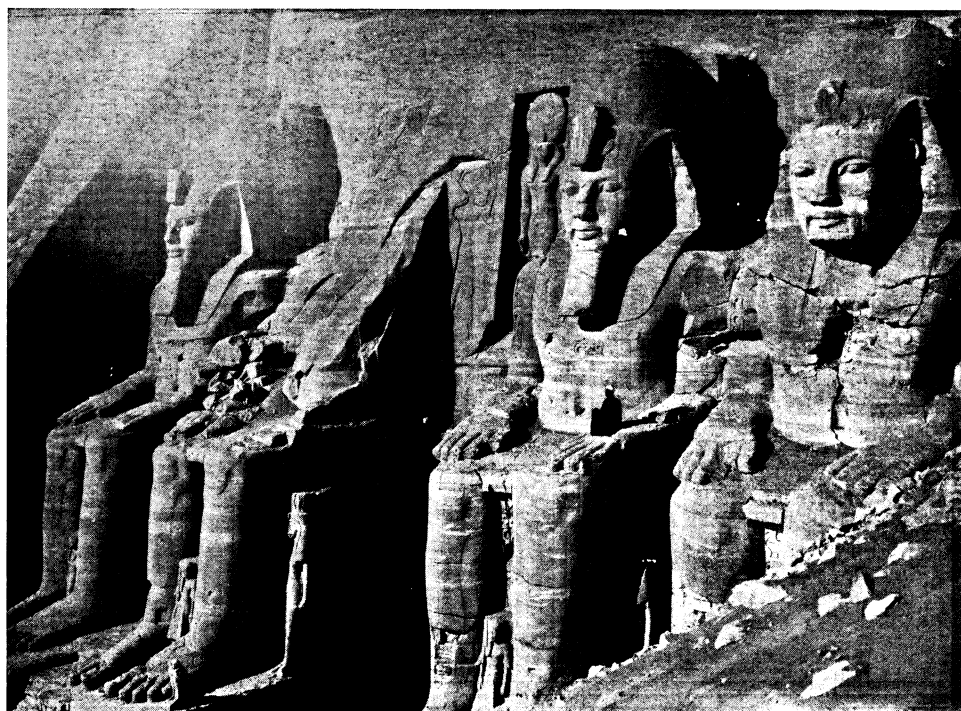
fair in their limbs, their bosoms, and their hair, all virgin; and bring me twenty nets, and give these nets unto the maidens for their garments."

The rest of the story must be perused in the "Egyptian Tales," since here is no space for it. There the curious may learn how the pretty little steerswoman dropped her jewel of "new malachite" overboard, and how the wizard, Zazamankh, separated the waters and recovered it, and for the telling of the tale of his exploit was rewarded with "a loaf, a jar of beer, and a jar of incense."

At length, when all their wars, their splendours, and their joys were done with, when Osiris, God of Death, had swept these mighty monarchs into his immortal bosom; when the mourners went about the streets, and the halls and the temples that they had reared were decked with melancholy emblems; when the embalmers had performed their long office upon the shell and



THE COLOSSI OF MEMNON.



THE GIANT FIGURES AT ABOU SIMBEL, WITH A SIX-FOOT MAN SITTING ON STATUE'S HAND.

*From photographs in the collection of Mr. Herbert Ingram*

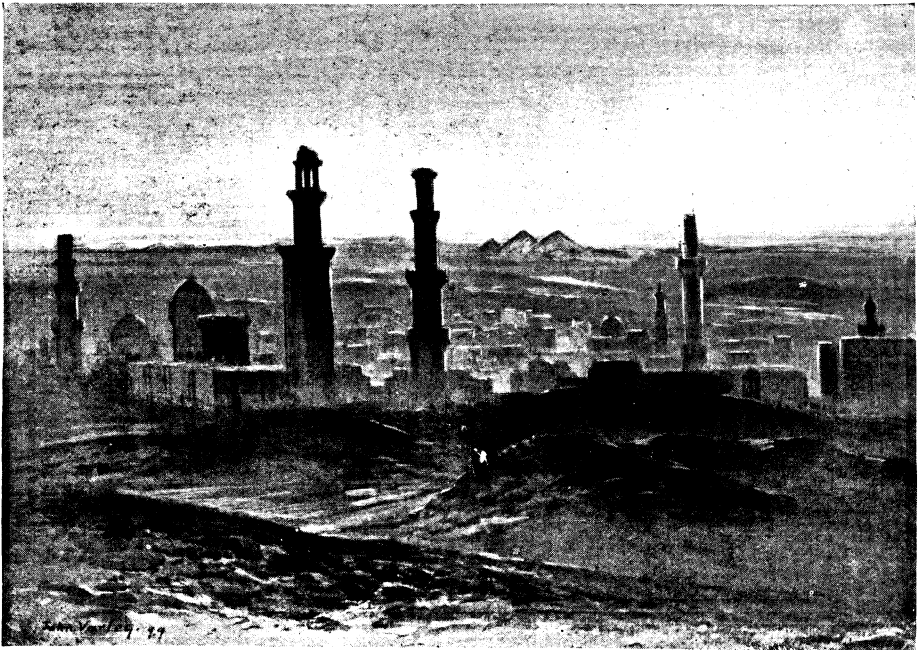
husk of majesty, came Pharaoh's last and most solemn journey upon the waters of the Nile.

From the eastern bank, that symbolised the Land of Life, accompanied by priests and officers and lamenting women, he was rowed to the western bank, beyond which the sun sets on its journey into the Land of the Dead. There, in the splendid tomb that he had hallowed and adorned, with ritual and with ceremony he was laid to rest amidst the kings who in their little day of glory had filled his throne before him. There, while one by one the centuries crept by, watched, as he believed, by his own *ka* or ghost, but utterly forgotten of mankind, he who had become but the echo of a name slept on in the scented silence awaiting the hour of the resurrection of the body.

What would he have said, this wearer of the Double Crown, this Pharaoh at whose bidding the Israelites toiled, and at whose threat the nations trembled, could he have foreseen that this resurrection would have come in the shape of a vulgar tomb-

breaker lusting for the jewels on his breast, or of some child of a new race whose desire for repute or learning led to the dragging forth of the flesh once worshipped by millions as divine, and its exposal half-naked beneath the glass of a museum, to be the wonder or the mock of tourists?

To this home of desecration, then, at length, the old river that once Pharaoh ruled bears him onward, while the women, whose mothers were his wives four thousand years ago, moved by some instinct of their blood, run wailing along its banks, as they did when the dark cave of Der-el-Bahari was emptied of its peculiar treasure of dead kings. All—all is changed, but the river is still the same, and surely therein lies the true romance of ancient Nile. I meant to write of it differently, to repeat the legends of Herodotus and the fables of the priests. But against intention the mind turns to these more human things, to the grandeur and the greatness that it has known, to the secrets of the past that its ever-living bosom hides.



CAIRO, WITH THE PYRAMIDS IN THE DISTANCE.

*From a water-colour drawing by John Varley, reproduced by permission of Mr. John Ward, F.S.A.*



"HARK, AWAY!" BY THOMAS BLINKS.

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## THE VALUE OF HUNTING.

BY LORD WILLOUGHBY DE BROKE.

PROFESSOR MAHAFFY, in that portion of his very interesting "Social Life in Greece" devoted to Attic Culture, tells us that field sports are vastly superior to pure athletics in their effects upon the mind. "The Greeks knew very well," he continues, "that such sports as require excessive bodily training and care are low and debasing in comparison to those that demand not only the ordinary strength and quickness of young men, but stimulate them to higher mental exercise—daring and decision in danger, resource and ingenuity in difficulty." To what degrees these qualities are evoked by football or cricket, polo or steeplechasing, it is not proposed to inquire, but among field sports pure and simple known to this country, that of the hunting-field bears away the palm for fostering and encouraging those attributes that are essential to the healthy existence of a great nation. It is not uncommon to hear that hunting, though externally flourishing, is really in a moribund condition, and is not likely to

survive another generation. A few months' residence in a fashionable hunting country would make it very difficult to fall in with this proposition. The actual sport itself seems to possess a charm that cannot be claimed by any other pursuit: loss of health, lack of nerve, a diminishing exchequer, are alike impotent to deter her votaries from sacrificing on the shrine of Diana. But as well as the unique attraction that hunting has for all sorts and conditions of men and women, there is a utilitarian aspect to the worship of the goddess that it may not be out of place to consider at this time of year.

The reduction of the chase to pounds, shillings, and pence has been so ably performed by Mr. Richard Ord, in his invaluable "Foxhunters' Vade Mecum," that one cannot do better than examine one or two of his figures, the accuracy of which can be amply testified to by those who have the actual pleasure of writing the cheques. He tells us that there are about 225 packs of foxhounds and staghounds in the United Kingdom,



"A FAIR LEAD." BY THOMAS BLINKS.

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consisting of some 9,000 couples of hounds, the yearly cost of which cannot be less than £500,000, while that of 180 packs of harriers and beagles, amounting to at least 3,500 couples of hounds, cannot be far short of £100,000. These figures only cover the actual expense of maintaining a kennel, servants, hounds, and horses, reckoned on the basis of £1,000 for every day's hunting in the week, a sum which has been ratified by all competent authorities as being correct. So much for the money spent by the M.F.H. alone. We now come to the distribution of money by his followers on forage, clothes for man and horse, saddles, stable tools, and the

hundred and one expenses of horsemastership. Mr. Ord has computed that there must be a total of 200,000 hunting horses, costing something like £10,000,000 to buy, and necessitating an annual expenditure of at least £7,500,000. The accuracy of these figures cannot be challenged, and, in the language of the compiler, they almost take one's breath away. A brief consideration of them seriously imperils the claim to good citizenship on the part of an enemy to hunting. No account has been here taken of the enormous amount of money that is circulated in a fashionable hunting country over and above the actual maintenance of



"NOW RIDE, LADS!" BY THOMAS BLINKS.

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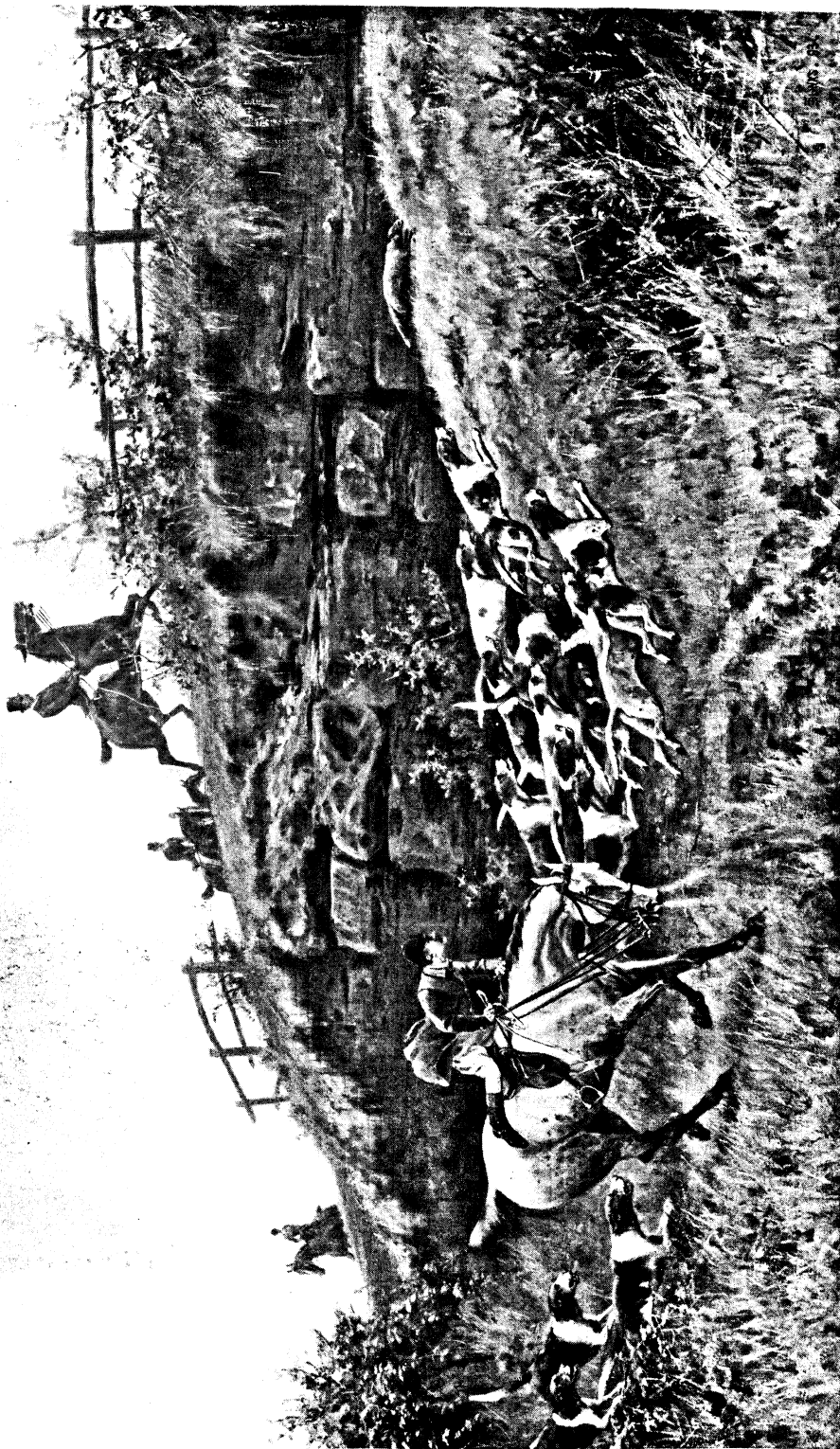


horses and hounds, owing to houses being let and the whole district being directly or indirectly enriched. It is enough to imagine one of the Midlands being bereft of the county pack, and all the innumerable channels of wealth suddenly stemmed. No wonder did Mr. John Lowe, a well-known owner and occupier of land, exclaim at the Warwickshire Puppy Show Luncheon; "Foxhunting! Why, Warwickshire lives by foxhunting"! In spite of the occasion, this was no mere rhetorical phrase, and the truth it contains would be endorsed by many others besides the good fellows who cheered the utterance of that gallant sportsman.

But there is a debit side to the balance-sheet, and fortunately a very small one, induced by the very popularity of the sport. Putting aside the many good runs that are spoilt on days when scent is not of the best, there is no doubt that the enormous crowds that follow the hounds, in practice as well as in theory, are apt to cause irritation to the occupier of land. Although permanent injury that can be pointed out at harvest-time may be comparatively rare, the riding over growing crops produces an unsightly appearance, and makes a demand upon the forbearance of the farmer; while the gaps in the fences mean a certain amount of time and trouble, though probably not much expense. Farmers who hunt, and, to their honour, a great many farmers who do not hunt, will offer no objection to this or make any reprisals—and the affair can generally be settled by a diplomatic Hunt Secretary; but it is well for hunting people to take every opportunity of identifying themselves with the interests of agriculture, and let each hunt contribute both directly and indirectly towards its success. This is already done in a great many counties, and few things are more admirable from every point of view than a hedge-cutting competition. As the result of prizes to the amount of £100, about seventy miles of fences may be cut each year, and the excuse for putting up wire rapidly disappears. Then there is the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Society, for which a good many thousand votes are controlled every year by contributions from various hunts. The Warwickshire Hunt pays a fixed sum every year to this institution, and is able, in conjunction with the county, to secure for its candidates the emoluments of the Society. Further than this, it allocates a sum of money to help applicants to tide over the very lean time of waiting for admission.

But there is no method by which hunting

can justify its necessity to the nation at large more than by the encouragement of horse-breeding. The introduction of self-propelled traffic has already seriously diminished our national horse supply, which is coming to depend more and more on horses required for the racecourse and hunting-field. It has been already estimated that 200,000 horses are annually employed for the purpose of hunting, and this fact alone is a very strong argument in favour of the preservation of the sport as a national need. But a great deal more may be done by hunting gentlemen than merely buying a sufficient number of horses on which to enjoy themselves. Every possible effort on their part should be put forth to encourage the keeping and breeding of light horses among the farmers. The first step towards carrying out this policy is the establishment of a Hunt Horse Show, or, at any rate, the generous support and careful management of existing shows. In connection with this, all hunter mares should eventually find their way to the farmers, for the purpose of being bred from. Should any owner wish not to lose sight of his mare, it is perfectly possible for him to lease her to the farmer at a nominal sum, thus keeping some control over the mating and general management of his old favourite. Out of the funds of the Hunt Horse Show a portion might with advantage be spent in buying brood mares, which might be leased by the Hunt to the farmers in a similar manner. These are a few of the directions in which an impetus may be given to an industry which may ultimately be called upon to play a very large part in national defence. "But where is the use in all this," someone will say, "unless the farmer has a market for his produce?" This extremely pertinent question can be answered in two ways. The main channels in which a market can be found are the hunting-field and the Remount Department. It seems a great pity that so many hunting gentlemen buy all their horses from the horse-dealer, instead of taking the trouble of going round and looking up the farmers' horses. I have not a word to say against any horse-dealer, having been always very fairly treated by them. I have bought horses in the past from dealers and shall in the future, but in addition to this I have had in my stable, during the summer, sixteen horses all bought from farmers in Warwickshire. If each hunting man were to make a compact with himself that at least one of his hunters should be bought each

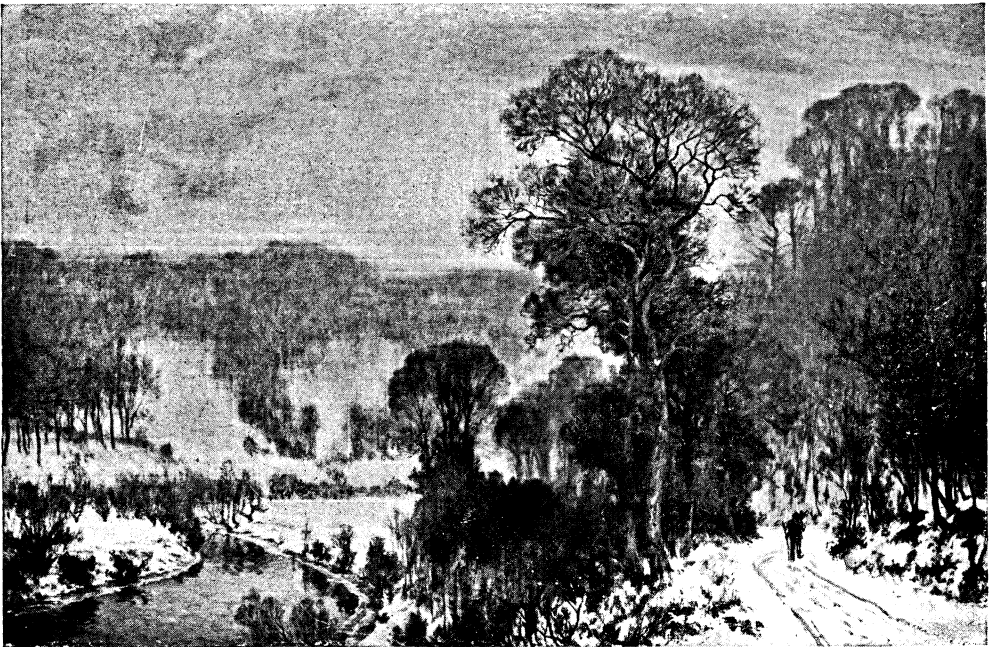


"THE FINISH." BY THOMAS BLINKS.

*Reproduced by permission of the Berlin Photographic Company, New Bond Street, W*

year directly from a farmer, a great deal might be done. But in addition to this, we must look to those who are responsible for the supply of horses for military purposes. The neglect of successive Governments to face this question has created an evil which it is almost impossible to overestimate. It is now a matter of common knowledge that mares are going out of the country every year at an alarming rate. During the past two years the Warwickshire Hunt Horse Show has instituted a class, the conditions of which may contain the nucleus of a check upon the exportation of mares. A prize is offered for the best mare between the ages of four and eight years, likely to breed a hunter, and free from all hereditary disease. The Hunt also offers a bonus of £10 to the winner in this class, provided she produces a live foal by a thoroughbred stallion or a registered hunter sire, *within the limits of the*

*United Kingdom*, at any time during the next five years after she has won the prize. Something like this will have to be done by the Government if we are to keep our mares in this country. With regard to finding a market for the farmer when he has bred an animal, it seems a very great pity that Remount officials do not visit country districts more often and inspect all the horses the farmers have for sale, which could be easily collected for this purpose. No real good will be done until the matter of horse-breeding is thoroughly taken in hand by the Government of the day, and public money spent on what is an urgent public necessity. If our rulers could only be persuaded to this course, they would find that hunting would form the most valuable ally possible in preserving to this country the use and enjoyment of the finest type of horse the world has ever produced.



"LO! ON MIDWINTER BREAKS THE VERNAL SUN."

BY HARRY W. ADAMS.

*Reproduced by permission of the Artist.*

# CHRISIMISSIMA.

By BARRY PAIN.



CHRISTINA ARGENT was, officially and otherwise, the leader of the school at Helmstone. Her age and position in the school gave her the official leadership and made her monitor. But

official leaders often have but little influence and dominance: Christina had much. If she had been younger and lower on the list, it is probable she would still have led.

There must be a reason for this, and Olive Pastowe would have said that the reason was that Christina was by far the nicest girl in the school and also the prettiest. But as Olive and Christina were great friends, Olive's evidence is open to objection on the score of bias. In some respects the girls were alike; they were both fifteen, both dark-haired. If Christina, who could look very proud, was really the prettiest girl in the school, certainly Olive came second. They had the same tastes; their handwriting was ludicrous in its similarity. But Christina had authority and Olive had none. Minna Nathan had explained this on the ground that Christina was the wealthiest girl in the school and the daughter of titled parents. But Minna, to be frank, was a mean-souled snob; and one regrets to add that Minna's papa was another. Ellen Holmes would have pointed out that Christina was the best hockey-player and could throw a cricket-ball just like a boy. This is true as far as it goes. But Christina was no Admirable Crichton in work or in sport. Her arithmetic was marked "Deplorable" in her report. Her friend Olive could give her half fifteen at tennis, nor could she swim twice the length of the bath under water, a feat which Ellen Holmes herself could accomplish. We must perforce consider that Ellen was wanting in psychological analysis.

It is more satisfactory—and also quite easy—to say that Christina Argent was a leader because she possessed the gift of leadership. It is a mysterious gift. It is a gift which

has been possessed by people who in other respects bore little resemblance to each other—by Chatham, for example, and by General Booth; by Gladstone and by Beaconsfield. In such men lies the note of dominant personality, and the greatest amount of the highest attainments can never make up for the want of it or take the place of it. Look, for example, at such illustrious failures as—— But you may fill in the names for yourself; you will have no difficulty.

The natural consequence of Christina's pre-eminence was that Olive's principal claim to consideration was that she was the one intimate friend of Christina. She had her own merits. If you had asked specially about her tennis, you would have been told that she was simply splendid, and had won a tournament in which several adults were engaged. In work she had shown an aptitude that was almost uncanny for English history. But if you had merely said: "Who's Olive?" the answer would have been—"Olive? Why, she's Christina's greatest friend." The principal claim to distinction would have been first stated. Mabel Leroy would have said that Olive was Christina's best pal, but Mabel was always a little slangy. It was commonly pleaded in her defence that she had many brothers.

It would appear from the pages of history that the favourites of the great all fall from their high estate. The kindly historian assigns the fall to the capriciousness and fickleness of the monarch, but it must be confessed that the favourite has frequently brought it on himself. Because he has held his position for a long time he regards it as an assured position; he has presumed. When we come to consider the celebrated break between Olive and Christina, which created so much talk in the Helmstone school, we find that the first step came from Olive herself. As she admitted afterwards, she began it. She may have been right in what she did, or she may have been wrong; the bare facts shall be recorded.

The school possessed its own playing-fields, and the pupils spent most of their leisure there; but at certain times they were required to take a formal and processional walk



"They read the letter together."

through the streets of Helmstone—a thing abhorrent. It is true that the walk gave them a passing glimpse into fascinating shop-windows and enabled them to make notes of the prevalent feminine fashions ; but these delights were miserably tempered. It was only a passing glimpse, and while you looked at one side of the street you missed things on the other. That delicious and prolonged flattening of the nose against the plate-glass, while you are wondering which you would buy if you could afford it, was not a thing that Miss Ferdinand or any of her agents would have permitted. If a horse had fallen or a motor-car broken down, the school might not stand around with wondering eyes and dropped jaws, and ask the policeman how it happened ; the procession could give but one longing look and continue to proceed. Then, too, there was the consciousness that this procession of girls, each with the school colours on a severe straw hat, was greeted with humorous and impolite comment by the vulgar. Men said things and you could see the smile. For this reason Christina at the head of the procession always wore an expression of remote, refrigerated haughtiness ; and even her friend Olive by her side did her best to appear less interested in things in general than she really was.

Subject to the approval of the authorities, the girls settled among themselves how they would be paired for the walk. Thus Elsa would say to Marjorie : “ May I walk with you to-day ? ” And Marjorie would reply : “ Yes, do let’s,” or “ I’ve promised Dora,” according to her inclinations or arrangements. But Christina and Olive always walked together as a matter of course, and had done so for a very long time—more than a fortnight, as Christina afterwards calculated. This makes the case look rather black against Olive ; yet it is possible that in what she did she was actuated by kindness—degenerating into weakness, if you like, but still kindness. Hear and judge for yourself.

Olive came up to Christina in the cloak-room five minutes before the walk started, and said : “ Chrisimissima ”—this was her fond abbreviation of her leader’s name—“ I hope you don’t mind, but I’m walking with Nellie Holmes to-day. She’s asked me so often that I was simply ashamed to keep on saying that I was engaged.”

Christina treated the matter with a suspicious lightness. “ Of course you’re not engaged,” she said. “ Hope you’ll have a nice time. I’d promised to walk with Gwen, anyhow.” This last statement was quite

untrue, and it is unfortunately not the only untruth with which we shall have to discredit Christina. She went off at once to make the arrangement with Gwen—a pusillanimous wretch who broke a distinct promise to Mabel Leroy in order that she might accept the flattering boon of Christina’s society.

Olive did not enjoy the walk in the least. She was troubled and depressed. She asked herself if she had done right. She loved Christina, but she did not want to hurt anybody’s feelings—not even those of Nellie Holmes. Still, if Christina was going to be offended, was Nellie Holmes worth it ?

Nellie, as has already been pointed out, could swim twice the length of the bath under water. But she stopped there.

Yes, the above paragraph is unfortunately expressed. What is really meant is that Ellen Holmes had no accomplishments other than natatory. Also, she was as plain as a motor-omnibus.

Christina was very angry. That “ I hope you don’t mind ” of Olive’s was tactless and rankled. Why on earth should she mind ? Any girl in the school would be only too glad and proud to be her companion on the walk. All the same, she did hate people who did not know their own minds, or pretended to be very fond of you when they really did not care. And if that was the way Olive was going on, she would soon show her—Elliptical but threatening.

She spoke of Olive to Gwen quite dispassionately, with scrupulous fairness, not shutting her eyes to the fact that Olive had her slightly ridiculous side. The slave Gwendolen endeavoured to echo the note, and got badly snubbed for her pains. Gwendolen had not realised that in her place by Christina’s side she was merely a caretaker, and that caretakers should not behave like owners.

Christina and Olive met after the walk. “ I’d much sooner have been with you,” said Olive at once.

Christina wore that air of not having heard which is not uncommon with those who have the gift of leadership. Olive had to repeat her remark, with some of the enthusiasm chilled out of her.

“ Really ! ” said Christina, giving her attention to the arrangement of her hair. “ I should have thought Minnie Nathan would just have suited you.”

“ It wasn’t Minnie Nathan,” said Olive indignantly, “ and you know it wasn’t. I simply can’t stand her. It was only poor little Nellie, because nobody seems—— ”



Christina swept away from the looking-glass with a fair-to-middling assumption of boredom. "Oh, well," she said, "you can't expect me to know who all your friends are; besides, it doesn't interest me."

The rapidity with which news of importance is obtained and circulated in girls' schools is a problem that still baffles the inquirer. That very afternoon it was whispered in the class-room that the old, almost monumental, friendship between Christina and Olive was quite broken up. The report was brought for confirmation to Christina herself by Minna Nathan, who was generally active in any pretty work of the kind. "You can't break up what wasn't," said Christina with cold disdain.

Later in the day it was announced, officially, that Miss Ferdinand would give a special prize for history at the end of the term; and, unofficially, that Olive Pastowe meant to go in for it. "Funny," said Christina, when she heard. "I'm going in for it myself. However," she added, with a humility which would have been more touching if it had been convincing, "she's bound to beat me."

It must be admitted that, as a rule, the disposition of extra prizes in this school was a matter of arrangement among the girls themselves. Naturally, the complete duffer was not allowed to annex them; that would have been unjust and would have awakened the suspicions of the authorities. But when four girls all had a chance for the same prize, they settled among themselves which of the four was to get it. The selection depended on various considerations. The girl who got the prize last time would, of course, be ruled out. The girl who was certain of other prizes would also be told not to be greedy. On the other hand, a girl who was in for a bad conduct report would have some claim on that prize as a counter-weight. The girl who first demanded it—"Bags I the history prize" would be the correct formula—and had been promised a sovereign by papa if she brought a prize home, would have a very strong case, more especially if she agreed to divide a moiety of that sovereign among the other competitors.

The system had its advantages. It prevented rivalry and bitterness of feeling. Under a strictly competitive system four girls would have worked cruelly hard, and three would have been disappointed; by this method one girl worked moderately, three were as slack as they pleased, and there were no disappointments at all. The captious moralist may say that it suggests that the

auction knock-out is a feminine invention, but we have no concern with him.

It will be seen, then, that Christina had disregarded the etiquette of the school. Olive, by using the "Bags I" formula, had put in a claim for the history prize. That claim would have been subjected to discussion, and might, or might not, have been established. But it was contrary to all settled principles for another girl to introduce a crude rivalry into the business, and, without any discussion of Olive's claim, to oppose it by sheer work. It meant bad feeling. It meant a lowering of the standard to that of mere competition. It meant that the girl who knew the most history would get the history prize. It was subversive. It was all wrong.

Yet there was no general condemnation of Christina's action; such was the strength of her position. It was regarded with sorrow rather than with anger. With gentle resignation all other possible competitors for that extra prize withdrew. In this life-or-death struggle between Olive and Christina there was no place for the ordinary weakling. Six to four in small square caramels was offered on Christina and taken.

It was terrific. The ease and exactitude with which both Christina and Olive answered all questions in each day's history lesson astounded, even while it pleased, Miss Ferdinand. Guilelessly she held up these two girls as examples to the class. Little did she know that Olive had borrowed money (which was against the rules) to buy candles (which were not allowed) for the purpose of nocturnal work in her bedroom—a thing absolutely illegal. Little did she know the still more horrid fact that the pages of Christina's prayer-book were liberally pencilled with mundane and ungodly dates, and that Christina committed them to memory when she should indubitably have been thinking of other things.

"I wouldn't work like those two for a good deal," said Flossie Bayle, and she spoke the truth and voiced the general sentiment. Any reasonable girl would have been reluctant to work like that, but people do silly things when their blood is up.

The break between the two friends increased and became more definite with their rivalry. They spoke to one another as little as possible now, and always with icy civility. Olive looked sometimes at Christina with wistful eyes, but Christina was careful never to look at Olive at all, and when Christina changed her place in the dining-hall so as not to sit

next to Olive, Olive bit her lip and took the only course possible to a girl of spirit; she complained of a draught, and thus got herself removed from the seat beside Christina in the class-room.

On the day before the examination Christina had gone back to even betting. Minna Nathan, who had accepted six to four from the friends of Christina, now backed Christina herself for five caramels, and openly proclaimed that she was on velvet either way. It is needless to add that Minna took the arithmetic prize.

Breakfast-time came on the great day of the history examination, and no books might be read at breakfast. Christina, however, circumvented the regulation. She received a letter from home addressed in the handwriting of her elder sister. The letter itself dealt with the Rockingham Administration, the career of Wilkes, the character of Thurlow, and other pleasant trifles of the period. In this way Christina was enabled to gorge knowledge up to the very last moment.

Olive also had a letter from home, but her letter was quite genuine, and Olive turned as white as the cloth when she read it.

The examination began at nine; when a girl had finished her paper, she handed it up to Miss Packman and was then free to go and play. Mabel Leroy looked through the questions, said "By gum!" under her breath, wrote two lines of fantastic imbecility about the surrender of Lord Cornwallis, and showed up her paper at 9.7 precisely. But this was not tolerated. She was commanded to think and to try again. At 9.30 she was allowed to go. Nellie Holmes had written all she knew, and some things that she did not know, a few minutes later. It was a stiff paper, and few there were that could wrestle long with it. When Minna Nathan showed up her paper at 11.15, after surreptitiously tossing a coin to settle the date of Chatham's death, she left only Christina and Olive still writing. The paper suited Christina perfectly. It would have suited Olive equally well, but Olive had received bad news that morning, and could not keep her mind on her work. Seated with her face to the wall, she had wept quietly and unobserved. But she was still struggling on when twelve struck; and the two girls met at the desk to give in their papers. Christina noticed Olive's face, seemed on the verge of speaking, and then turned away.

Christina knew that she had done well. She had answered every question. She had

been a little in doubt as to the date of Austerlitz, and had made a shot. The shot, she found on referring to her history, had been singularly blessed. But, even as she turned the pages of the history, she was haunted by that look of Olive's. What could have happened to her? Christina felt that she must find out, and for that purpose she sought Minna Nathan. Minna was not popular, and knew far too much arithmetic; but Minna had also a gift for knowing the private affairs of other girls.

"Come here, Minna," said Christina, with dignity. "Now, then, what has Olive been crying about?"

"Don't you know? Her mother's ill, and there's to be an operation to-morrow morning. I believe she'll die; they generally do when there's an operation. I'll have a bet with you on it, if you like."

"No. Go on."

"That's all. Oh, yes, she's to get a telegram to-morrow morning. She didn't seem to want to talk about it much, and she's gone off to the end of the garden by herself. It's ruined her chance of the history prize—she says that half the time she didn't know what she was writing about."

"I see," said Christina.

Christina had set her heart on that history prize. There could be no doubt that she would get it, and quite suddenly she found that she did not want it at all; the only thing she did want was that Olive should have it. She made her plan on the instant.

"Is there anything else you want to know?" asked the obsequious Minna. "I can find out some more if you like. Mother calls me her little detective."

"Does she? Sweet child! No, I don't want any more. By the way, you're all wrong about the history prize. The paper didn't suit me a bit. I made a lot of howlers, and some of the questions I never even tried."

Minna went off, eager to disseminate the news of Christina's failure. Christina could generally calculate on what Minna would do.

Olive sat alone on a bench at the further end of the garden. It was very cold, but she did not notice it; the evergreens shut out from her view the terrible world. In one red hand she held a wet handkerchief, and in the other the letter from her father.

After all, it contained crumbs of comfort. "I hope to send you a reassuring telegram to-morrow morning," it said. "Don't be frightened." She read the sentences over

and over again. Oh, if she only had somebody to whom she could really talk about it! In the old days——

She looked up at the sound of a footstep, and there was Christina—Christina, with both hands stretched out—Chrisimissima, with no dignity at all, and visible tears in her eyes.

“Oh, Olive dear! don’t tell me to go away, or be polite, or anything. I’ve only just heard, and I’m most awfully sorry for you. And I wish I hadn’t behaved like a pig and a beast to you. O-oh, o-oh, o-oh!” Christina was sobbing.

“Oh, Chrisimissima!” They became inarticulate, with their arms round one another.

A little later they read the letter together. And it appeared that Christina’s mother had undergone an operation, and had got well again ever so soon; and that, on the whole, operation; were rather a good thing, because doctors were most frightfully clever nowadays.

Olive was much comforted, and the delicate question of the history prize was touched upon. “Of course I’ve lost it,” said Olive. “Really, I hardly knew what I was writing, and I couldn’t think. But I’m glad you’ll have it. The only thing is that my people will be disappointed—mummy particularly; and I hope it won’t be bad for her. You see, history’s about the only thing I was ever any good at.”

“That’s all right,” said Christina. “It’s absolutely certain you’ve got the prize. I can promise you that. The paper didn’t suit me in the least, and none of the things that I had worked up were asked. I was perfectly putrid. I didn’t even try half the questions.”

“I did more than that,” said Olive doubtfully. “But, still——”

They compared notes. Christina repeated her assurance. Olive would get the prize, and Chrisimissima would be delighted.

It happened even as Christina had said. The history prize was awarded to Olive, who wondered how it had come to pass, but telegraphed the glad news home to a convalescent mother. Christina was told that her answers had been scanty and inaccurate. “You have disappointed me,” said Miss Ferdinand. Christina smiled sweetly.

Now, Christina had done well in the examination, Olive had done badly, Miss Ferdinand marked the papers fairly, and yet Olive got the prize. The explanation is simple enough.

The position of monitor carried with it the very high privilege of acting as occasional errand-girl to Miss Ferdinand. It was always Christina who was deputed to bring the pile of examination papers from the class-room to Miss Ferdinand’s study.

“Here is the key of the desk in which the papers are,” said Miss Ferdinand solemnly. “And remember, Christina, that I am trusting to your honour.”

Christina had only to transpose her own papers and Olive’s, changing the outer sheets which alone bore the competitor’s name. The close similarity of their handwritings prevented any detection of the fraud. Often in the old days had Olive written half of Christina’s imposition for her, or Christina rendered a similar service to Olive.

Chrisimissima had been insanely jealous. She had told fibs. She had, in the matter of the examination papers, been guilty of a dishonourable breach of trust. Can anything be said for her?

## THE LAST APPEAL.

**I** WILL not call on memory  
To fight for me to-day;  
It is the future, not the past,  
To which I dare to pray.  
Oh! if you turn where new lights burn,  
And break the old-time vow,  
It is the future you will hate  
If you should leave me now.

How will you bear the every day  
That comes an empty show;  
How bear to see the daylight come,  
To see the daylight go:  
And know that neither waxing light  
Nor waning light will bring  
The only one in all the world  
To whom you’re everything?

E. NESBIT.

# "AFTER REYNOLDS."

By FRED M. WHITE.



HE affair had developed rapidly, of course, as such things always do. It had been fed on moonlight, as usual, and watered by dewy nights under the shade of the awnings to the accompaniment of

music. And, as usual, she was beautiful, and he was a young man going back home again after four successful years spent in quite the approved fashion, restoring the fallen fortunes of his house. And he had done it, too, which is a way they have occasionally, both in real life and in the pages of fiction. It is possible, of course, for a man to spend a few years on the west coast of Africa and come home again little the worse in health and considerably benefited in pocket. Thus Gerald Eversleigh.

He was not thinking now about the old house and all the improvements he was going to make, because his mind happened to be full of Miss Flora Canning. He knew perfectly well that she was the daughter of a rich American, who was on his way to England for a visit. He knew perfectly well, too, that Mr. Canning was quite different from the ordinary Yankee who has made his pile in the ordinary way. He was perfectly well aware of the fact that Canning was proud of the English blood in his veins, and that he was really descended from a good North-country family. This, of course, was all by the way. That was not the point which puzzled and slightly irritated Eversleigh. He could not get over the feeling that he had seen Flora Canning before. Of course, it was absurd, because he had never been in America, and, with the exception of one brief visit, Miss Canning had never been in England. And even if they had ever met, she must have been a mere schoolgirl when that one visit was paid.

In the first moment that Eversleigh had seen her on the boat he had been filled with this haunting feeling that he had seen her before. He could not understand why it

was that the girl should instantly remind him of his old home. He could not understand why, directly he saw her, his mind was filled with visions of old oak and Jacobean furniture and quaintly carved picture-frames. Behind all this was a background, faint enough, of laces and silks, and large picture hats with suggestions of Gainsborough about them. It was certainly very strange that whenever Eversleigh saw Flora Canning, she seemed to be reminiscent of the seventeenth century. And yet she was modern and up-to-date enough, though she certainly might have made an exquisite picture for Reynolds or Romney to paint. And so things went on till the boat was due at Madeira. So far, Eversleigh had been content to take the romance as he found it. So far, he had not even informed the Cannings that the name of Eversleigh was merely a Christian name, and that he had adopted it for commercial purposes.

It was the night before the boat reached Madeira, and he got some sort of a clue to the mystery which worried and at the same time fascinated him. For once, Flora Canning was not on deck, so, on the principle of being near the rose in the absence of it, Eversleigh was smoking his cigar with her father.

"No, I shan't be in England very long," the latter was saying. "Really, I am going there for more or less sentimental reasons. I shouldn't have mentioned it if I hadn't found out quite by accident that you know so much about the early English school of portrait painters. Now, I am a collector. What I particularly favour is the work of Reynolds. I am more especially attracted by him because at one time or another I have happened to pick up a good many specimens, mostly representing the women of my own family. When my grandfather came to grief, his collection was disposed of, and it was always a sentiment of mine to get those pictures back if ever I made money enough. And now I really have got most of them at my place in Philadelphia; but there is one that I am particularly anxious to buy, and I have had a terrible difficulty in tracing it. And now, by good fortune, I've got the chance of buying it. The picture is at a place called

Morton Dene, in Derbyshire. I believe the real owner has let the place, and has authorised the tenant to sell any of the pictures if they happen to go at a fair price. It isn't a bad chance of getting the picture."

"I suppose not," Eversleigh said thoughtfully. "In fact, it's rather cute. They would probably fetch a lot more money if they were seen by wealthy collectors on their native heath, so to speak. And it so happens that I know something about Morton Dene. I was born in that neighbourhood myself. Doesn't the house belong to a man called Edenbridge?"

"I believe that is so," Canning said. "But, at any rate, I shall know all about it at Madeira. I expect to meet Denham-Carter there, and he will go back on our boat."

"And who is Denham-Carter?" Eversleigh asked.

"Well, I understand that he is the tenant of Morton Dene. Edenbridge let him the house furnished. I understand from my daughter that the Denham-Carters are none too well off, and that they take paying guests in an exceedingly superior way. But that doesn't concern me. What I am going down to Morton Dene for is to see this particular Reynolds, which I intend to buy even if I have to give a fancy price for it. And thereby hangs a tale. At the same time Reynolds painted two portraits of two distant connections of mine. These girls were sisters. One of them was fair and small, and I have her portrait. She is the very image of my second daughter, May, making allowance for a difference of costume, etc., and the strange part of the whole thing is that the other portrait, now at Morton Dene, is the exact likeness of my daughter Flora. I know that, because Denham-Carter sent me a photograph. So now you will see why I am so anxious to have the picture. It strikes me as a very strange and fascinating thing that, after the lapse of a century and a half, Nature should reproduce two girls in the same family so exactly resembling their famous ancestresses. I hope you won't think I am sentimental."

"Oh, the contrary," Eversleigh said warmly. "And now I begin to understand why Miss Canning reminds me of someone. I begin to understand why it is that when I see her, my mind is full of Old Masters and early Georgian painters. Seeing that I am acquainted with Morton Dene, I must have seen that portrait, and it must have impressed me more than I was aware. And so Eden-

bridge has let Morton Dene to your friend Denham-Carter? If he takes paying guests, as you say he does, I should very much like to go down there. I have very few friends in England, for I have lost touch with most of them; indeed, I expect I am so altered that they would hardly know me."

"I dare say that would be all right," Canning said. "I'll introduce you to Denham-Carter to-morrow, and then you can make arrangements."

Eversleigh remained on deck for some time, sitting silent and thoughtful under the stars. He had a good deal to think about, and his musings appeared to cause him considerable satisfaction. He had the opportunity the next day of seeing the tenant of Morton Dene and being introduced to him. Denham-Carter looked like a gentleman; indeed, he suggested a naval officer of distinction. He had the easy, natural manner of one accustomed to good society, and the determined face and firm-cut mouth of a man who knows how to get his own way and perhaps is not altogether too scrupulous in his methods of doing so. He stared hard enough at Eversleigh when the introduction was made, and just for the moment he changed colour. But it was only for a moment, and then his easy, natural manner returned. Still, for the next day or two, it seemed to Eversleigh that Denham-Carter was watching him closely, and that he was puzzled as to his ability properly to place his new acquaintance. He had an expression in his eyes such as may be seen on the face of a poker player when big stakes are on the table, and he knows that he has an adversary worthy of his steel. But before the English Channel was reached, all this suggestion of suspicion had vanished, and Denham-Carter was the easy, fascinating man of the world again. Indeed, he seemed to go out of his way to make himself agreeable to Eversleigh. He had known what it was, he said, to drift abroad for years and lose sight of old friends, and if Mr. Eversleigh liked to come down to Morton Dene with the Cannings, he was quite sure Mrs. Denham-Carter would be delighted to see him.

Eversleigh murmured his thanks; the offer was too tempting to be refused. And Flora Canning seemed to be pleased, too.

"I'm so glad you are coming to Morton Dene," she said. "And then, of course, you know the place."

"I know the house," Eversleigh explained. "It's run on rather novel lines, isn't it?"

"Oh, quite. You see, it's such a splendid

idea to entertain guests in a charming old house which is a perfect specimen of Tudor architecture, full of old furniture. Of course, the Denham-Carters don't call people 'paying guests.' They entertain a carefully selected house-party, and I believe that when you are there, you would not know it from an exclusive gathering in any great country seat. You don't pay so much a week, or anything of that kind, nor do you see a bill. You go when you please and leave when you please, then you write the usual letter of thanks afterwards, incidentally enclosing a cheque at the rate of a good many guineas a week. You see how delightfully simple it is, and in what good taste."

"Magnificent," Eversleigh murmured. "Does it go on all the year round?"

"Well, except from Christmas to March, when the Denham-Carters go to Monte Carlo. Mrs. Denham-Carter is by way of being an invalid. But you shall see for yourself. I am quite sure you will be grateful to me for my discovery."

Eversleigh admitted enthusiastically that it was no fancy picture which Flora Canning had drawn of the delights of Morton Dene. He had been there just four-and-twenty hours, and he and his companion were pacing up and down the terrace in front of the house before tea-time.

"Now, didn't I draw a fair picture of the place?" Flora asked. "I ask you if I exaggerated in any particular. There is something so Tennysonian about the house. Look at the long, grey front, the moss-clad pillars, and the pigeons up in those gables, and the peacocks flaunting their plumes in the sun. Wouldn't a poet such as Austin Dobson love to describe this place?"

"It is certainly charming," Eversleigh said.

"Oh, that's a poor way of describing it. Do you know it is the dream of my life to have a house like this for my own. Most Americans rave over old places, but I don't think they really appreciate them, unless they happen to be really English at heart, as I am. I shall really have to find Mr. Edenbridge and make love to him. I believe I could love any man who could give me a home like this."

"There's no knowing what may happen," Eversleigh smiled. "I have just been looking at the Reynolds which your father is so anxious to buy. It is a beautiful piece of work, quite in the master's best style, but I understand that Denham-Carter's asking a fancy price for it."

"But he's not selling it for himself, you understand."

"Oh, I quite appreciate that fact. But our respected host is not without an eye for the main chance, and the bigger the price, the bigger the commission. Still, your father is keen on having the picture, and I suppose the four thousand guineas he is paying for it are no great matter to him. It's a pity, all the same, your father can't get the shooting he wants later on. Still, even that might be managed."

"Do you really think so?" Flora asked.

Eversleigh refused to say more, and together he and his companion returned to the house. The light began to fade presently, and a couple of decorous footmen came into the hall with shaded lamps in their hands. It was a charming scene altogether, the half light, the great wood fire on the hearth, the broken shadows falling on the old silver on the tea-table, upon pictures and statues and the dusky gleam of armour. Mrs. Denham-Carter, perfectly gowned and full of small talk, presided at the tea-table. About her a score of guests were gathered. There was absolutely not one inharmonious note, no sharp tone of colour to suggest that the whole thing was being run on a commercial basis. Eversleigh stood contemplating the picture critically and talking in a desultory sort of way to his host. It seemed to him that Denham-Carter was not altogether easy in his mind; the strange look of suspicion was back in his eyes again, and there was something almost combative in his manner. In an odd sort of way Eversleigh felt that his host was waiting for something. It came presently through the medium of one of the decorous footmen and a telegram on a silver salver. Denham-Carter took up the envelope carelessly enough and proceeded to open it. Then his expression changed, and his wife looked up at him swiftly.

"I hope there's nothing the matter, dear," she said. "Oh, George, don't tell me that Emily is worse!"

"It's very sad," Denham-Carter said, "but your sister has had a relapse, my dear. She has been ordered out to Madeira again, and she wants you to go with her at once; and, under the circumstances, I don't see how you can possibly refuse. It will be very awkward, of course."

A murmur of sympathy went round the table. Mrs. Denham-Carter applied a few inches of exquisite lace to her eyes and





“The point is that you are a cool, audacious scoundrel, and I have been fool enough to put myself in your power.”

sobbed. Denham-Carter was understood to say that these things were all for the best, and that the trouble might not be so serious as it seemed.

“Our guests will quite understand,” he said. “But I hope they won’t let this unfortunate message cast a gloom upon them. It will be time enough to think about trains and Bradshaws and all that sort of thing in the morning. I hope you good people will make yourselves quite at home till to-morrow, at any rate. I shall have to leave you men to your claret and cigarettes after dinner, because, naturally, my evening is likely to be a busy one. It will take me all my time to get the servants out of the house and the caretakers in before we leave for Southampton to-morrow. By the way, Canning, we can settle our little business before bed-time, can’t we?”

“Isn’t it sad?” Flora murmured to Eversleigh.

“Yes, it is a good joke,” Eversleigh said

absently. “Oh, I beg your pardon! Most sad, really.”

It was very unfortunate, of course, and Denham-Carter and his wife came in for a good deal of sympathy. The former appeared to take it philosophically enough. There was a great deal to do, and directly dinner was over he disappeared in the direction of the library. By way of consolation to his male guests, he left out something exceedingly particular in the way of claret, and also a cigar the like of which is not met every day. It was getting rather late before the company in the dining-room broke up and the men began to scatter over the house. Eversleigh strolled into the hall to ascertain whether he could see anything of Miss Canning, but she was not there. He was moving in the direction of the drawing-room, when one of the decorous footmen stopped him.

“Would you mind going as far as the library, sir?” he said. “Mr. Denham-

Carter would like to see you before you go."

"Go where?" Eversleigh asked.

Apparently, the question was a natural enough one, but it seemed to puzzle the servant. He looked at Eversleigh stupidly enough, but the latter asked no further explanation. Possibly the man had managed to blunder over his message, but the gist of it was clear enough. Denham-Carter wanted to see him, and, as a matter of fact, he was equally anxious to see Denham-Carter.

He made his way at once along the corridor which led to the oldest portion of the house, where the library was situated. This portion of Morton Dene dated back to the time of the first Henry.

The old, solid masonry still remained, the thick, stone walls had suffered little from the ravages of time. Here, in the old, turbulent days, had been a kind of monks' room or sanctuary, where more than one conflict had taken place. There was a sort of secret passage leading down beneath the moat, whereby anyone bold enough to take the plunge could dive under the water and come up on the far side. This fact was known to few people, but, at any rate, Eversleigh had heard it, and the thought was uppermost in his mind as he made his way to the library. The room was lighted only from the roof, the heavy walls were lined with books, and, indeed, the only modern innovation there had been the comparatively recent installation of the electric light.

Denham-Carter looked up from the table where he was writing as Eversleigh entered, then he rose from his chair and walked over to the door, which he proceeded to lock. Then he put the key in his pocket. The thing was so coolly done that Eversleigh could not but admire its quiet determination.

"No reason for us to be interrupted," Denham-Carter said. "Would you mind sitting down, Mr. Edenbridge?"

"I beg your pardon," Eversleigh said.

"Really! I thought I spoke plainly enough. Still, I don't want to have a misunderstanding with you. Of course, I know that it pleased you, when you came here, to call yourself Gerald Eversleigh, but that's not your name. I am quite sure that you will not deny the fact that you are Mr. Edenbridge."

"I will let that pass, if you like."

"Quite so. I thought you would take a sensible view of it. You are a man of the world, with plenty of natural courage, and

I have no doubt that in the course of your wanderings you have been in a good many tight places."

"I have," Edenbridge said, "and I am not blind to the fact that I am in one now. But that's no reason why we should quarrel over things. Pass me those cigarettes, will you?"

"With the greatest pleasure. I am glad you are taking so common-sense a view of the matter. I suppose you don't know who I really am. You don't know my real name?"

"What does it matter?" Edenbridge said indifferently. "The point is that you are a cool, audacious scoundrel, and I have been fool enough to put myself in your power. I must congratulate you upon the neat way in which you have managed things. The message you sent me by your footman was quite a diplomatic model in its way. You must have thought it out very carefully."

"Well, I did. You see, it wanted a certain amount of consideration. You see, I have to be most cautious. When I joined the boat at Madeira, it was an unpleasant surprise to me to recognise you. I shouldn't have done so, only, when I was making arrangements with one of your trustees to obtain possession of this house, I happened to see on his desk an amateur photograph of yourself taken somewhere in Africa and sent home by you. That was a bit of luck in its way, which I didn't quite appreciate at the time. But I appreciated it right enough when I met you at Madeira, and I saw the danger in a moment. I hope I'm not boring you?"

"Not at all," Edenbridge said politely. "On the contrary, I am most interested. Pray go on."

"Well, you see, that meeting was most awkward for me. In the first place, it looked like upsetting all my arrangements. I had no idea that you intended coming back to England so soon. One of your trustees is now mentally unfit to take any part in business, and the other one is a careless sort of man who never troubles about anything. That is why I had no difficulty whatever in producing certain documents which satisfied him of my *bona fides*, and that I had made arrangements with you to rent Morton Dene furnished. And, on the whole, I made a very good thing of it. But, you see, there was always a certain amount of danger, and I always made up my mind that if I could get out with a few thousand pounds, I would do so. I

began to see my way to this when I heard from Mr. Canning on the subject of the Reynolds. It looked such good business that I went to Madeira to meet him. And there I met you, too, and not being quite a fool, Mr. Edenbridge, I saw at once that you were up to every move on the board. I was prepared to bluff it out, but I saw that you were a man with a sense of humour, and that you were going to see the game through to the finish. Well, that suited me very well. I saw in a short time that you meant to keep your end up till Canning was ready with his cheque, and that then you would step in and spoil the show. Isn't that what you came down here to do?"

"Your instinct is marvellous," Edenbridge said. "That was my precise intention, and I was going to do it to-morrow. But don't you think you are carrying matters with rather a high hand? I am afraid that, physically speaking, you would be more than a match for me, and I see that you have something neat in the way of a revolver on the table there. But how do you propose to get rid of me? Awkward questions may be asked."

"Oh, I don't think so," Denham-Carter said thoughtfully. "Nobody knows that you are in England. You have never approached any of your friends yet, and you are always spoken of as 'Eversleigh.' You haven't been in this neighbourhood since you were a boy, so there is no chance of anybody recognising you. Now, by to-morrow afternoon we shall have cleared out of here, and when I go away, I shall take the Reynolds with me. I propose to lock you in here and leave you to make your way out as best you can. It was done once, a century or two ago, as you are quite aware. An ancestor of yours, who was confined in his own house, managed to make a hole in the floor by using his broken sword as a tool, and subsequently dived into the moat. It took him four days to do it, and by that time he was more or less of a wreck, but he managed it all right, as the records of the family show. I don't see why you shouldn't do the same thing, seeing that you know exactly how to go about it."

"It is a pleasing programme," Edenbridge said, "and it does you credit. But pardon me if I am dense enough not quite to understand. For instance, Mr. Canning will wonder what's become of me. That is one point."

"Oh, not at all. You are supposed to have left the house already. The telegram I

received after tea-time was really addressed to you. At the present moment it is lying on the mantelpiece in your bedroom, and anybody who reads it will come to the conclusion that it indicated danger to yourself, and that you should be in London without delay. Within an hour's time I shall be on my way to the station, made up to look as much like you as possible, and my own chauffeur will drive me there under the impression that he is driving you. I shall take a first-class ticket to town, and I shall be seen to enter the train, but as it is only a single line here, I shall quietly creep out from the other side, and in an hour's time I shall be back again. That will dispose of you. And you've only got yourself to blame. You deliberately chose to pit yourself against me."

"It was foolish, wasn't it?" Edenbridge said drily. "But I've enjoyed it, and I don't regret the fact at all. However, there are flaws in even such a perfect skill as yours. Now, I take it that you are going to put me to all this inconvenience, not to say danger, so that I can be kept out of the way till you have negotiated your little matter with Mr. Canning and cashed his cheque. At the end of four days you ought not only to have done this, but you ought to have reached a place of safety. I see you follow me now. And now I am coming to the first flaw in that little scheme of yours. Mr. Canning is quite prepared to pay the price you ask for the Reynolds, but being a business man, he declines to part with his cheque till a well-known expert has reported favourably. Is not that so?"

"The point is conceded," Denham-Carter said.

"Very well, then. Now I am going to tell you something. It so happens that my grandfather was a great spendthrift. He had many ways of raising money, and one of them was by selling the family pictures. Amongst these pictures he disposed of the Reynolds which is the cause of our present little argument. He sold the picture, and to prevent awkward questions by Courts of Chancery and trustees and other painfully suspicious people, he had a copy of it made by a clever artist, for which he paid a sum of five hundred pounds. My grandfather was a cynical old man, and he kept the receipt for the double purpose of showing his sense of humour and preventing complications later on. You see what I mean, Mr. Carter. And if you don't believe what I say, you will find the very evidence in this room. I



“Oh, it's like that, is it?”

will procure it for you if you like. It is in the bottom drawer of that quaint, old secretaire over yonder, which opens by means of a concealed spring. But perhaps you would like to see for yourself. . . . There, now, there's no getting away from that, is there? Then, if that doesn't satisfy you, I will produce the letters which passed between my grandfather and the man who

bought the original Reynolds. Now, come, Mr. Carter, you are a man with a brilliant and original mind, and you would be one of the first to admit that this is a serious flaw in your little scheme. Of course you might murder me and burn these documents, and I know you are perfectly ready and willing to do it. But, really, would it be worth while? You would gain nothing by such

an unnecessary risk. You see, you can't deceive the real picture expert. He would be certain to pronounce the picture a forgery, and therefore your chances of getting Mr. Canning's cheque would be remote. You will fail to gain anything by all your cleverness. And if you do cause me any further inconvenience, then I promise you, when I am free, I will hunt you from one end of the world to the other. In the language that you are fond of using in your circles, the game is up, Mr. Carter."

The easy smile faded away from Denham-Carter's face. He turned the faded yellow papers over in his hand and examined them carefully. There was no doubt in his mind that they were absolutely genuine, and there was no doubt in his mind either that Edenbridge was presenting a perfectly unanswerable case. Denham-Carter picked up the revolver from the table and dropped it into his pocket.

"I give you best," he said. "You have been too many for me, and I always know when I am beaten. It would be folly on my part to push this thing any further if you are ready to make terms."

"Oh, I don't mind," Edenbridge said. "You're an infamous rascal, and I ought to prosecute you, but I have had a lot of fun out of this thing, and I am not disposed to be hard. Unlock that door. That's the first condition."

Denham-Carter unlocked the door calmly. It was a sign of a complete and absolute surrender.

"That will do," Edenbridge said. "Now you can go and tell your charming partner exactly what has happened. And you are not to see any of your guests again, mind. You and Mrs. Carter will go to London by the first train to-morrow morning, and the rest you may leave to me. Now go. Go straight to your own room and stay there. I think that's all."

\* \* \* \* \*

"It seems to me that I am under an obligation to you," Mr. Canning said. "At

any rate, you may have saved me the loss of a good deal of money. Picture experts are not always right, you know. Sometimes they err."

"They wouldn't have done so in this case," Edenbridge laughed, "because the picture is perfectly genuine. I didn't tell Denham-Carter so, for obvious reasons. I proved to him beyond a demonstration that my grandfather sold the picture and had a copy painted, but I didn't tell him that when the trustees found it out, they compelled my grandfather to buy the Reynolds back again. You see, I forgot that."

"How perfectly splendid!" Flora Canning cried. "How clever of you! But I suppose now that you won't part with the picture?"

"I expect not," Canning said regretfully.

"Oh, I think we shall be able to come to an understanding," Edenbridge laughed. "There is more than one way of managing this kind of thing. For instance, we might make an exchange."

Canning looked inquiringly at the speaker. He did not seem quite to follow, but obviously Flora did, for she looked down at her feet and a little colour crept into her cheeks.

"Perhaps I had better explain," Edenbridge said. "Now, suppose you take the picture and I take the copy. You are bound to admit that when your daughter came into the world, Nature obviously copied her from Reynolds. And, in any case, an arrangement like this will keep the picture in the family, and when you are away in Philadelphia, you will have the consolation——"

"Oh, it's like that, is it?" Canning asked.

"Indeed, I hope so," Edenbridge said quietly. "We will leave it to Flora to decide."

"It seems a good arrangement," Flora said demurely. "And dad will get his shooting at Morton Dene, after all."

## AN INVITATION.

**L**ITTLE trout among the shallows where the water ripples white,  
 Won't you leave your weedy nursery, come with me and spend the night?  
 I've a bath-tub all enamelled—soap that smells of flowers and things,  
 Sponge and towel so soft and downy I could wash the Angels' wings.  
 Nurse would give us nice warm water, rub us dry and help us dress,  
 And you could sleep behind the pillows in the downstairs linen press.

ARCHIBALD SULLIVAN.



"Making a careful inspection of all the rooms."

## NERVOUS PEGGY.

BY W. HAROLD THOMSON.



HE is a nice girl, Peggy, but in a weak moment she married my brother John, and I discovered that, though a nice girl, she is a highly nervous one. Yet John is the most harmless and docile creature

imaginable, but perhaps for that very reason, or because he is a sensible man, he never attempts to argue with his imaginative wife.

Peggy's imagination is so vivid that it is a positive danger to her. There are times

when I think that she'll die of imagination. I wouldn't say this to John, of course, but it's what I think.

If Peggy happens to be out walking alone on a country road—which is about once every six months—and if she sees a tramp coming towards her, she instantly concludes that the tramp is going to take her life. Perhaps the tramp puts a hand into a pocket in search of his pipe; Peggy thinks that he is feeling for a knife. As the tramp comes near, Peggy shivers and shakes all over, and rolls her eyes and gasps and works herself into such a state of excitement that the worthy tramp, taking her for a madwoman, slinks past her and then starts to run. So



does Peggy. And when they have put about a mile between each other, the tramp leans up against a wall and wipes his brow and says: "Lummy! she wor a crazy one, that one!" and Peggy sinks in a heap at the roadside, and weeps quietly, and thinks that she has been mercifully preserved.

Then, when she reaches home, she creeps close to John and tells him all about her terrible encounter with an escaped convict, and how she had to run for three miles without stopping, in order to prevent the convict killing her. When John asks her what her reason is for thinking that the man was a convict, she looks at him reproachfully and says: "John, do you think I don't know an escaped convict when I see one?" and that, of course, ends the matter, for John is a sensible man and never attempts to argue with his wife.

At night, especially in winter-time, Peggy sticks to John like a shadow, and persists in sitting with her face to the door, so that she may see the danger coming. The danger has never come yet, but this doesn't by any means set Peggy free from care. She puts it down to the fact that the enemy is waiting for a suitable opportunity.

Every night at ten o'clock she makes John go carefully over the house, snibbing all the windows on the ground floor, locking and barring all the doors, and making a careful inspection of all the rooms in order that no villain who may happen to be lurking in any of them may continue to blush unseen. Then Peggy goes to bed to dream that somebody is going off with the silver and with the drawing-room clock. I am sorry for Peggy. Also I am sorry for John. If Peggy dies of imagination, then John will die of an imaginative wife, and that will be a worrying thing for Harley Street.

I was staying with John and Peggy last week, and one night we were all invited to a friend's house for dinner. Now, this friend's house is two miles away from John's, and the miles are miles of wild and lonely country road, with bushes and trees and boulders on either side of it. John would not accept the invitation because he had a sore throat, but Peggy accepted for my sake—so she said—and I accepted to please Peggy.

On the eventful night, therefore, John sat himself cosily down before the fire, and Peggy, having warned him not to let anyone burgle the house without a stout resistance on his part, set off with me. We arrived at the house in safety, but rather tired, for we had walked the two miles hastily. John, be-

ing known, keeps neither a motor-car nor a carriage, which, considering the position his brother holds, is rather ridiculous. We spent a very pleasant and jovial evening with the friend (who desires to remain anonymous), but when we started on our homeward journey, the trouble began.

As winter nights go, the night was an excellent one; the air was crisp and clear, there was no rain, and the young moon gave just enough light to guide our footsteps and to show up a blurred mass of trees and bushes. When we had gone about half a mile, and Peggy had come to the unhappy conclusion that neither of us would ever reach home alive, I heard the sound of voices in the distance. Peggy heard it too. She clung to my arm and drew closer to me.

"Ralph," she whispered, "do you hear voices?"

I said nothing.

"Ralph," she whispered again, "do you hear the sound of men's voices?"

"Yes," said I. "What of it?"

"Why, there are men coming towards us," she half whispered. "I'm sure they want to r-rob us. Perhaps they want to m-murder us."

"Nonsense!" I said sternly. "They're probably just a couple of honest ploughmen—er—plodding their weary way."

She wasn't satisfied. "If they were honest, they wouldn't p-plod at this time of night. They're bound to be h-highway-men."

The men drew nearer, and Peggy darted round to my other side and clung to my arm in a most painful manner. When the men came abreast of us, I felt her trembling, and I thought that she was going to faint.

"Fine night," said one of the men.

"Fine night," I answered, and walked briskly on, trying to keep up with Peggy, who had broken into a sort of delirious trot.

She looked back at me.

"Did you hear his voice, Ralph?" she panted. "Oh, *what* a voice! I'm sure they're following us."

I was sure they weren't, but I couldn't have convinced her of that, so I said nothing. I have something of John's wisdom.

The remainder of the walk was far from being enjoyable. Peggy was perpetually looking round to see whether the men who weren't there had come near enough to strike us. She squealed if a bird moved in a tree; she shied hysterically at every shadow on the road, and once, when we were passing

a field, she gripped my arm and whispered tensely: "Ralph, there's a ghost in that field—look—look there!"

I looked at the ghost and discovered that it was a white horse, but I might as well have told Peggy that it was a white elephant.

We got home somehow, and Peggy gave

John a detailed account of our adventures. I said nothing, because I don't dabble in fiction, and Peggy went happy to bed that night in the belief that she had once again been mercifully preserved. Now, what I want to find out is this: What can be done with a girl like that? Knowing reader, I leave the answer to you.



"'They're bound to be h-highwaymen.'"

# ENGLAND'S STORY IN PORTRAIT AND PICTURE.

## II. FROM THE ACCESSION OF ÆTHELBERT TO THAT OF ALFRED THE GREAT.

IN our preceding article the pictures were ranged to represent the principal events of the story of our country from legendary times down to the accession of Æthelbert, King of Kent, whose rule may be regarded as a landmark in the evolution from mere intertribal conflicts and separate governments into something approaching to more consolidated monarchy.

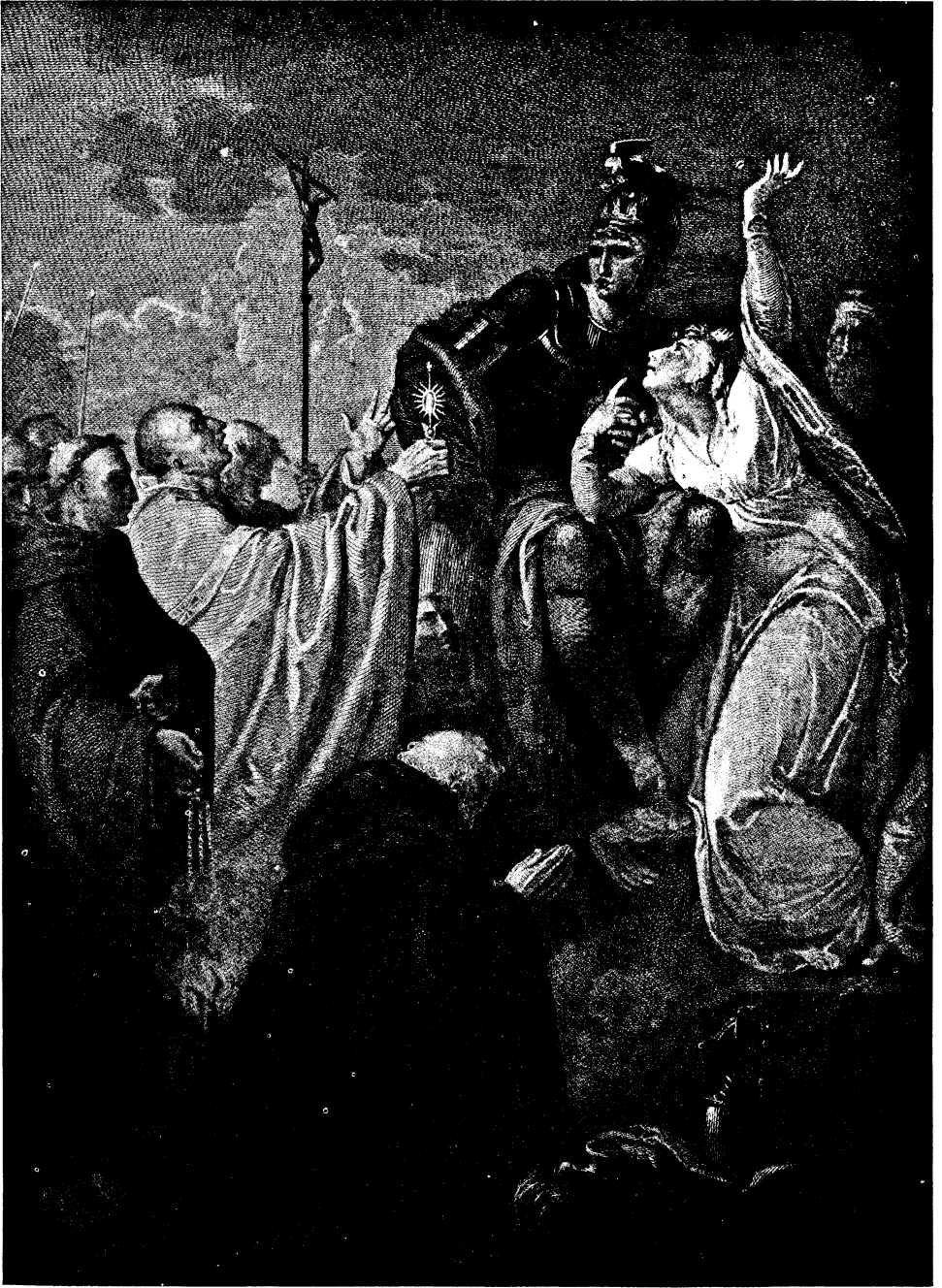
The division of England into the separate warring States that were paradoxically known as the Heptarchy, and did, indeed, but for a very short time, actually number seven, is now, when we can run from John o' Groats to the Land's End in a few hours, one of the most difficult facts of history to grasp.

Kent rose into being in the year 457, perhaps under Hengist, although he is quite possibly only a mythical hero, and, small as it is in geographical extent, it had the start of all the other States in order of time. Here it was that the Jutes first established themselves, and from their settlement grew the kingdom of England. The boundaries of each State were advanced, and were forced back, to be again advanced, as desire for aggrandisement, or policy, on the part of the overlord or Bretwalda, or disaffection amongst the people, caused them to war one with another; and we hear now of the supremacy of Kent, then of Northumbria, and again of that of Mercia, and later of that of Wessex. The other three divisions of the land never rose to the eminence of these four. In the history of East Anglia during this period, there is nothing memorable except the conversion of its ruler, Earpwald (617-628), son of Redwald, who, persuaded to Christianity by the Northumbrian king, built a Christian altar in the chapel devoted to the worship of Wodin, and the murder of its last ruler by Offa, in 792. Sussex, which remained pagan to the end of the seventh century, we may suppose to have evolved codes, constitutions, forms of government and the like, and to have been a happy, peaceful country, since we have of it but sparse records, under rulers the names of few of whom are chronicled after its founding by Ella between 477 and 491. Chichester is said to have taken its name from Cissa,

the son of Ella. Essex, too, continued as a minor State. It produced a line of rulers with soft, sibilant-sounding names such as Sleda, Sebert, Sexted, Seward, Sigebert, Swithelm, Sigheri, Sigered, men who, according to the Venerable Bede, had leanings towards learning and civilisation.

Æthelbert, who succeeded to the position of Ealdorman, overlord, or Bretwalda, of Kent in 564, was said to be a son of Hermenric, the son of Octa, the son of Escus, who was the son of Hengist, and Hengist, the founder of the kingdom, was reputed to be the great-grandson of the fabulous deity, Wodin, from which tradition it is evident, as David Hume wrote: "What fruitless labour it must be to search in those barbaric and illiterate ages for the annals of a people, when their first leaders (Hengist and Horsa) were believed by them to be the fourth in descent from a man exalted by ignorance into the character of a deity." With the exception of the northern part of the land, Æthelbert reduced the States to dependence. His reign lasted fifty-six years, and its most memorable event was the introduction of Christianity amongst the English. Christianity was undoubtedly planted in Britain at a much earlier period. We must admit this, even if we reject the traditions that it was introduced either by the Apostle St. Paul, or by St. Peter, or by Joseph of Arimathea, or if we hesitate to agree with Canon Perry that its tenets were made known by the Phœnicians. By the end of the third century it had undoubtedly secured a considerable number of converts, and the records of Gildas of the persecutions of its followers, under Diocletian, fix the year 303 as that in which Alban, a Roman soldier, suffered death at Verulam (St. Albans) for sheltering a Christian priest. When, therefore, Gregory the Great, the then Roman Pontiff, sent Augustine to England in the reign of Æthelbert, the rapid success of his mission, in spite of the hostility assumed by the then religious leaders, was probably due to the traditions of Christianity which survived.

Before Æthelbert married, in 584, Bertha, the daughter of Charibert, King of Paris, who was grandson of the great Clovis,



"ST. AUGUSTINE BEFORE ETHELBERT, 597." BY H. TRESHAM.

the conqueror of Gaul, it was made a condition in the marriage contract that the princess should be free to continue her faith's observances; and she therefore brought with her a French bishop. Bertha

sought to convert her husband to her own religious principles; but it was not until about 598 that his conversion was actually accomplished and then by other means. For in 597 Ethelbert received Augustine and

his followers. They were given the church of St. Martin, in Canterbury, where Bertha and her bishop, Liudhard, had hitherto worshipped, a church erected in the later years of the Roman rule. At Whitsuntide, 597, Ethelbert became a professing Christian, and his example was followed by most of his subjects. Augustine was made Archbishop of Canterbury by Pope Gregory, with authority over all the nation's churches. Ethelbert's nephew, King Sebert of Essex, who is said to have founded the University of Cambridge in 644, was shortly after converted by the missionary Mellitus, whom he made the first Bishop of London, and for whom he built St. Paul's Cathedral, on the venerable site on which Diana's temple had been erected by the Romans; and at the same time the church of St. Peter was built upon the site of the temple of Apollo, on the spot where Westminster Abbey now stands, which was then an islet, Thorney Island, formed by the Thames and a small branch. In 607 Ethelbert defeated the Welsh at Chester and extended his kingdom to the sea. He

died in 616, and with him died the supremacy of Kent.

Four years before the death of Ethelbert had come the succession of Ethelfrith to the kingdom of Bernicia, founded by

Ida, his grandfather, in 547.

He it was who, by joining to Bernicia the kingdom of Deira, or North

Anglia (founded by

Ella in 560), which

he seized in right of his wife, Acca,

Ella's daughter, created the

Northumbrian kingdom. It

was, however, under the

government of his

successor, Edwin, who

was the son of Ella, and

therefore Ethelfrith's

brother-in-law, that

Northumbria really assumed

its marked superiority over

the other provinces.

Edwin extended his

State's sway, showing

leniency only towards

Kent, then under the

rule of Eadbald, who had

succeeded his father,

Ethelbert, in 616.

His sister Edwin had

married.

In the reign of Edwin Northumbria became Christian, and the See of York was established; for the daughter of Ethelbert, emulating the fame of her mother, Bertha, had taken with her to her husband's



"THE BAPTISM OF ETHELBERT, 597." BY WILLIAM DYCE, R.A.

*From the fresco in the Houses of Parliament.*

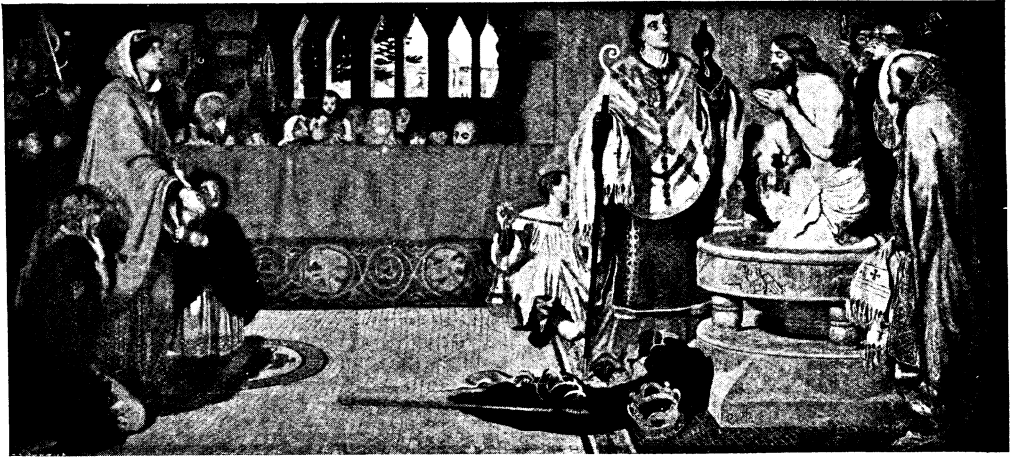
court the famous Paulinus, York's first archbishop.

Edwin was not to rule the land long as overlord, for pagan Mercia, now, in 628, under the sway of Penda, formed a conspiracy of central English States, whose armies Penda led in revolt against Northumbria.

He harassed Edwin for several years, and ultimately slew him and his allies and his son, Osfrid, at the battle of Heathfield, or Hatfield Chase, north of Doncaster, in 633. He killed the second son of Edwin, Eanfrith, and it was the third son, Oswald, who became responsible for the preservation of the kingdom.

Oswald sought out the Britons, then under

655 Oswy and his Northumbrians defeated and slew Penda in battle at Winwedfield—events which finally decided the strife between the creeds of Christ and of Wodin. A note appended to that admirable work, "The Historians' History"—to which reference should frequently be made in the study of this tangled period in our country's evolution—explains that through all his life "Penda struggled against the Christian kingdoms, and remained a consistent heathen to the last. Here the veracity of Bede has preserved to us a most interesting portrait. 'Nor did King Penda obstruct the preaching of the Word among his people, the Mercians, if any were willing to hear it; but, on the contrary, he hated



"THE BAPTISM OF EDWIN, KING OF NORTHUMBRIA, 627." BY FORD MADOX BROWN.

*Reproduced by permission of the Corporation of Manchester, from the mural painting in the Manchester Town Hall.*

the leadership of Cædwalla, and by their help secured a victory in 635, a date of some importance, as it may be said to mark the completion of the English Conquest. To Oswald, to quote from "The Historians' History," belongs the credit of the restoration of the realm of Edwin to its former greatness; but nine years after his accession, he, too, was overthrown by the invincible Penda, and the supremacy of Northumbria temporarily lapsed, although it still remained the seat of learning and of culture, the land of Cædmon and Bede.

The death of Oswald, regarded as a martyrdom, was one of the most famous events of our early history, and dwelt in men's minds for many centuries. Oswald was succeeded by his brother Oswy, and in

and despised those whom he perceived not to perform the works of faith, when they had once received the faith, saying: "They are contemptible and wretched who do not obey their God in whom they believe.""

Oswy, to whom the death of Penda opened an ambitious path, overran East Anglia and Mercia, annexed to his own dominion the northern parts of the provinces, and placed the southern under the government of his son-in-law. It was during his reign that the Church began to assume an influence that was destined eventually to make for national unity.

In 664 Oswy summoned the clergy together at Whitby, that he might understand and quell the differences that had arisen between them on matters of Church discip-





"KING EGFRID OFFERING THE BISHOPRIC OF HEXHAM TO CUTHBERT, THE HERMIT OF FARNE ISLAND."

BY WILLIAM BELL SCOTT.

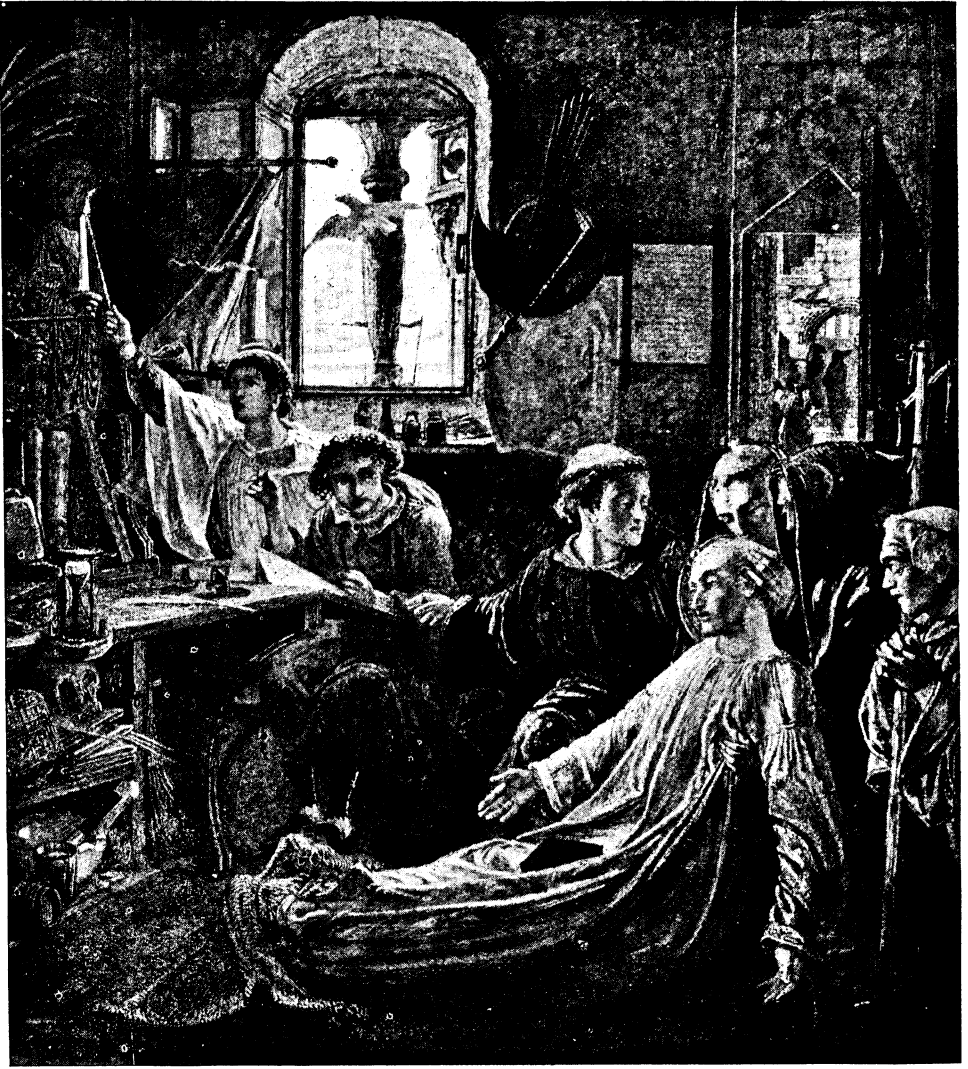
*From the fresco at Wallington, Northumberland, the seat of the Right Hon. Sir George Otto Trevelyan, Bart.*

line; and he it was who decided that the Church should thenceforth follow the customs of Rome, as opposed to those of the Celts.

He made Theodore of Tarsus Archbishop of Canterbury, and as the result of that prelate's reorganisation of the existing laws of the English Church, the Roman ritual became still more predominant.

Oswy was succeeded in the government of Northumbria by his son, Egfrid; but with this king's death the country's supremacy ended, and Mercia temporarily reassumed the eminence which she had achieved under Penda.

But the day of the supremacy of Wessex had dawned, and though Ethelbald, a nephew of Penda the great, became overlord of all the south, Mercia's sun was visibly near its setting, or, at least, behind a bank of western clouds. It shone through these once again, however, and with almost dazzling brightness, when Offa took the reins of its government into his hands in 757. Temporarily he conquered Wessex and reduced Kent to a state of dependence. He seized the kingdom of East Anglia, after treacherously murdering the king of that country (the second of the two



"THE DEATH OF THE VENERABLE BEDE, 735." BY WILLIAM BELL SCOTT.

*From the fresco at Wallington, Northumberland, the seat of the Right Hon. Sir George Otto Trevelyan, Bart.*

events which marked its being). He practised much devotion in the latter part of his reign, for he founded St. Albans Abbey, perhaps as compensation for his early despoilments of the Church, and, after a reign of thirty-nine years, he died in 794, having, as Freeman says, acquired a position "as great as that of any English king before the final union of the kingdom." It was in his reign that the Danes first landed in England, and he established the tax called "Peter's pence," levied for the relief of those who at that time began to make pilgrimages to Rome, and for the education of

the clergy. With the death of Offa came the rise of Wessex, and power, which had hitherto been migratory and tidal, flowing from Kent to Northumbria and thence to Mercia, reached its height in the kingdom of Wessex.

From frequent warfare against each other, and the gradual extinction of the original royal families of Kent, East Anglia, and Northumbria, there had been by this time effected a complete change in the relations of the seven Teutonic kingdoms in England. Ina of Wessex subdued Kent, obliged Essex and Sussex to recognise his supremacy, and

obtained several successes over the Mercians and the Britons of Cornwall; and he increased the prosperity of his kingdom by publishing a code of sixteen laws for regulating the administration of justice, fixing compensation for crimes, and limiting the hereditary feuds of families. His pious zeal led to his founding several religious establishments; and on his voluntary abdication, after a reign of thirty-seven years, he went with his queen Ethelberg to Rome, where he founded a Saxon college.

pendencies, Mercia had obtained Kent, Essex, and East Anglia. The Heptarchy had thus become a triarchy—Mercia, Wessex, and Northumbria. Beornwulf, King of Mercia, invaded Wessex in 823, but was repulsed by Egbert, who thereupon invaded Mercia and detached from it Kent and Sussex; and Beornwulf's power received a fatal blow immediately afterwards by the revolt of East Anglia to Egbert. Beornwulf was allowed to retain his kingdom on condition of becoming tributary to Egbert, a



"HOW THE DANES CAME UP THE CHANNEL A THOUSAND YEARS AGO." BY HERBERT A. BONE.

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Afterwards Wessex became a prey to foreign aggression and civil discord, till the accession of Egbert, who, having been exiled in his youth, had found a refuge in the camp of the celebrated Frankish Emperor of the west, Charlemagne. On his return and accession, after the sixteen years' reign of Beorhtric, Egbert put into practice the lessons he had learned in Charlemagne's army, and soon restored her former glory and power to Wessex. While Wessex had again swallowed up Sussex and its de-

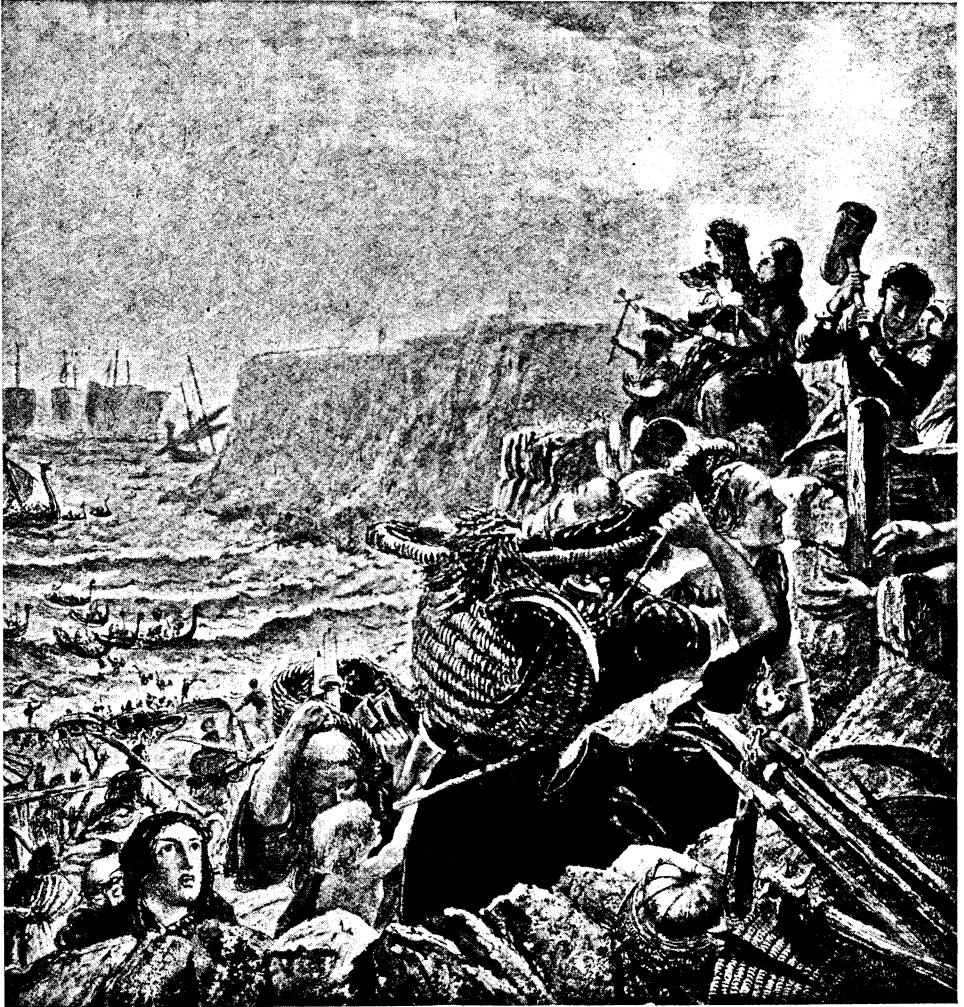
position which was soon after accepted by the ruler of Northumbria, 827, and Egbert was crowned at Winchester as King of the Saxons.

Thus Egbert, by the vigour of his personal character and his success as a warrior, absorbed into his own dominion the Saxon kingdoms of Kent and Essex, as his predecessor Cædwalla subdued and annexed Sussex, and established a controlling influence over Mercia, East Anglia, and Northumbria, although the latter were, in respect of internal government, independent.

The history of the gradual fusion of the Heptarchy, or of the Octarchy, as some modern historians prefer to call it—for Northumbria had been divided into Deira and Bernicia, and there were still contentions and rival claimants—is a tangled thread. The fact remains that Wessex was now the most

West Saxon overlord, England was made, in fact if not in name."

Nearly thirty years subsequently, in 853, Kenneth of the Scots added the kingdom of the Picts to his own, by a great victory, according to the chroniclers. Britain was now, therefore, divided between three powers



"A DESCENT OF THE DANES." BY WILLIAM BELL SCOTT.

*From the fresco at Wallington, Northumberland, the seat of the Right Hon. Sir George Otto Trevelyan, Bart.*

powerful of all the Saxon kingdoms, and that its king, Egbert, exercised an authority greater than that possessed by any of his predecessors.

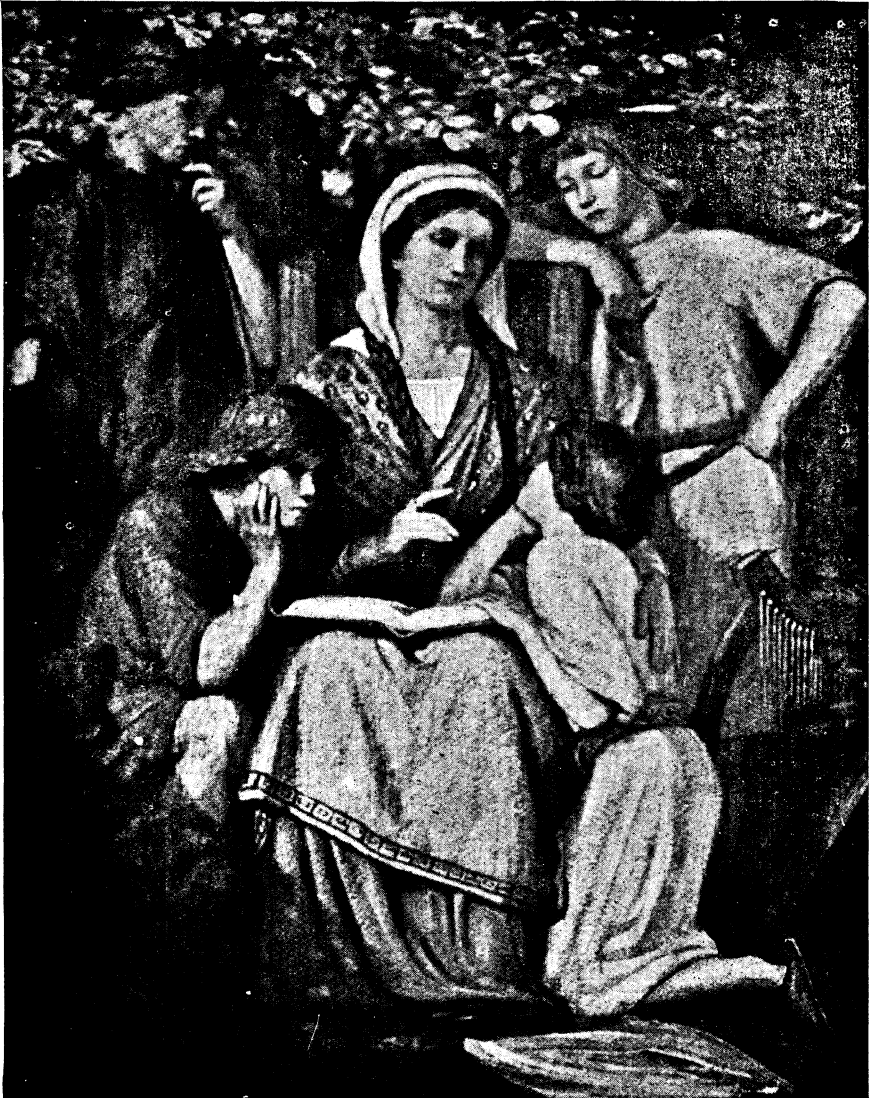
Green, in his "The Making of England," says that subsequent struggles never wholly undid the work that the sword of Egbert accomplished, and that "from the moment the Northumbrian thegns bowed to their

—the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Egbert, the east, middle, and south of England; the principalities of the Britons, west of England; and Scotland.

The conquest of the Britons of Denbigh and Anglesey completed Egbert's kingdom; and the territory throughout which he was either king or overlord eventually embraced

the whole of England proper, with portions of Wales and of the Scottish Lowlands. But he was not permitted long to enjoy his conquests, for a new enemy, of kindred race with the Angles and Saxons, appeared to harass the British coasts. These were the

year they returned in larger bodies, and made the British coasts their winter quarters; but they received some severe checks from Egbert, who defeated them with great slaughter at Charmouth, in Dorsetshire, in 832, and in 835 at Hengsdown Hill, in Cornwall.



"HOW ALFRED, AS A BOY, OBTAINED A BOOK FROM HIS MOTHER." BY H. R. MILEHAM.

Norsemen, Northmen, or Scandinavians, the name of Scandinavia being then applied to the countries now known as Norway, Sweden, and Denmark.

They had landed in Holy Island, off Northumbria, as early as 787, and in 794 they devastated the north of Ireland. Each

Egbert was succeeded in 836 by his son, the feeble Ethelwulf, 836-856, whose education in a monastery had totally unfitted him for defending his kingdom against the Vikings. Finding the cares of State too much for him, he assigned the government of Essex, Kent, and Sussex to his eldest son,





"THE MILITARY ELECTION OF ALFRED, 871." BY R. CATON WOODVILLE.

Athelstane; and on the death of the latter his second son, Ethelbald, seized and retained the government of the western counties, and compelled his father to abdicate in 856. Ethelwulf died in 858, and in 860 his third son, Ethelbert, who had held a part

of the kingdom during Ethelbald's reign, succeeded his brother and reigned till his death in 866. From 850 till Ethelbert's death the kingdom was torn by internal quarrels and harassed by the constant descents of the Vikings, who were by each



success becoming bolder, and penetrating farther inland. The realm was again nominally reunited under Ethelred I., Ethelwulf's fourth son, 866-871; but the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms existed now only in name, and the tributary rulers of the old Teutonic kingdoms were asserting their independence of the authority of Egbert's line.

In 869 Ethelred I. obtained a victory over the Norsemen at Æscedune, or Ashdown, in Berkshire. But the last year of his short reign, 871, was marked by a great invasion of the Norsemen—20,000 Danes—the greatest armament that had yet issued from the fiords of Scandinavia. They landed in autumn on the coast of East Anglia—Norfolk and Suffolk—where they spent the winter in a fortified camp, collecting horses for the great campaign, and enlisting bodies of disaffected Northumbrians. In the ensuing spring they marched upon York and seized the town. They reduced the whole country from the Humber to the Tyne, and advanced upon Nottingham, which they captured. Here they were met by the Anglo-Saxon army under Ethelred I., who was accompanied by his famous brother, "Earl" Alfred, the first to bear that title in this country, and Burhred, the vassal ruler of Mercia.

After sustaining for some time a siege in Nottingham, the invaders were obliged to evacuate the town and retire upon York, where they received reinforcements. Again

they crossed the Humber, and after desolating Lincolnshire, advanced into East Anglia, where they seized and put to death the vassal king, St. Edmund—over whose remains a splendid monastery was subsequently erected at Bury St. Edmunds, in Suffolk—and placed one of their own chieftains, Guthrum, on the throne. Passing into Wessex, they surprised Reading, which they were preparing to make a fortress and arsenal, when they learned of the approach of the Anglo-Saxon army. The native forces were commanded by Ethelred I. and Alfred, his younger brother. The Danes were posted on an eminence at Ashdown, and were protected by a thick underwood. The armies met, and a desperate hand-to-hand encounter ensued. The Danes wavered, then broke, and retreated in confusion, followed by the victorious Saxons as far as Reading. But the Norsemen rallied, and within a fortnight defeated the Anglo-Saxon army at Basing. In a third battle at Merton, the issue of which was doubtful, Ethelred was mortally wounded.

He was succeeded by his youngest brother, who was then in his twenty-second year, but was already marked out by destiny for the illustrious career which was to make him the embodiment of our modern civilisation, and earn for him the undying name of Alfred the Great.

But the story of his reign, with the many pictures which it has inspired, must form the subject of our next article.

## WHEN LIFE GIVES UP THE SILVER KEYS.

**W**HEN life gives up the silver keys,  
And blinds the windows, one by one,  
Shall I go out to some dark lodge  
Beyond oblivion?

Or will God let me stay awhile  
To tread old paths with silent feet—  
To haunt, with harmless tears, the rooms  
Where now we meet?

When Death has stilled the eager blood  
And drawn his palsy over all,  
God, leave my soul on this old earth  
Till the last call!

THEODORE ROBERTS.

# THE RELAPSE.

By H. E. CALDWELL SMITH.



CECILY and Perceval Waterson had been married for three months: they lived in a Garden City on a diet of vegetables and in an atmosphere of Art.

Their living-room, needless to say, had a red-tiled floor, a raftered roof, a settle and dresser, and at the unclothed table on this day the two sat "breaking their fast." They were entirely conscious of the picture made by the room and by themselves in it; their attitudes as they balanced their cups betrayed it. Even the blue ware was self-conscious in its tendency to wobble, showing its true soundness of character, its honest birth from hand and wheel.

Perceval wore a loose-woven linen shirt, a flowing green tie, sandals, and—hated concession—the "pair of tubes" which men call trousers. Cecily was complete, with the convert's zeal, in a blue-green djiba embroidered with lotus flowers, over a white smock. Her hair was rolled up loosely behind with two large copper pins: Perceval had "wrought" them.

They were breakfasting on milk and bananas, bread and grapes, and when all was eaten, Perceval looked across at Cecily rather wistfully. She knew it must be sorrow for the close of the poem of their classic repast.

"Sure you've had enough, dear?" said he.

"Quite," a little wearily. The question annoyed her. Surely she could be as ethereal as he? Already the strain of continued transcendentalism was beginning to show in tiny lines under her eyes, while Perceval looked fairly content; but then he was indigenous, she was transplanted.

Perceval looked across rather apologetically, stroking back his hair with a gesture she had loved æons ago.

"I have to plunge into the 'World's Blot' again to-day—business," said he.

It was their own name for London, from whence she had been transplanted, but to-day the image of Perceval plunging, all naked as

for a bath, into a blot of ink arose; the laughter impulse took her by the throat and would not be denied. She rocked with laughter, meaningless, hysterical, so that he was annoyed and went away.

Cecily mechanically fetched a large china bowl, marked "leadless glaze," from the scullery, and washed up the breakfast things, unstained by fat of flesh, on the living-room table. Then she arranged them on the dresser shelves, thinking unguarded thoughts. She remembered her hesitation about choosing this beautiful free life as an escape from her suburban home, until her love for Perceval had swept her away. Was she really breathing a purer air? Surely, in exchanging social trivialities for honest hand-labour, beautiful surroundings and community of thought. And yet this morning her soul was sick of Art.

She loathed enamel and stained glass and wrought metal—and all the appurtenances of Perceval's craft. He had begun inlaying a tulip on one side of their bedroom wardrobe—she longed to tear it out with her fingers.

She longed for the flesh-pots—she panted to plunge into the Blot which Perceval had to enter so often—she could almost wish he might be smirched, and so descend a little from his heights.

She was sick of reading books in tooled leather covers, of watering her Morris bay-trees out of a copper pot, of all the plans she had lately contrived for attuning her mind to the Infinite.

If there were only more housework—but their beds required no making; she had only to turn the sleeping-sacks outside in, hang them over the foot, and cover the mattress with a linen spread.

At this point in her thoughts Perceval came down the open staircase, tweed-clad, and passed through the living-room where she sat. For a moment, as she clung to him in farewell, she knew that nothing mattered except that where he was there she must be, too, and then, as she watched him from the window-seat, her reactionary mood returned.

A good many Garden City husbands seemed to be seeking the Blot that morning.

She thought of her neighbours. There were the Latches, who had fourteen children, and solved the clothing question simply, by allowing one garment each. The little Latches all attended the Open Air School (with and not unlike the sparrows) and were, indeed, its chief support.

Mrs. Cosby, whose husband was an African explorer, lived up a tree in her garden when it was dry, and had a bulldog tied to the trunk at night. Miss Brasch merely went in for intensive culture of the soil, but her next-door neighbour had five spectacled children, who were all reported to write for a Socialist newspaper, and belonged to the Fabian Nursery. Others were merely mediæval, and some few wanted to be let alone.

No; there was no help in these.

Cecily moved up and down the room restlessly, till she stopped opposite a mirror framed in tortured pewter, and examined her face carefully. She thought there was very little trace of the pretty, fresh girl of a year ago in the "tragic woman with curtains of hair and heavy-lidded eyes." She searched every feature, realising, even while she longed backwards for the more commonplace, that there was more lasting beauty in what she saw.

"I *do* look like a Burne-Jones," she thought at last, "but—I'm hungry . . . hungry."

And at that she ran upstairs and feverishly pulled from some corner a chest—archive of horrors! She took out garment after garment with a happy smile of greeting for each of these crimes of her youth, and piled them all on her bed. Then she took off her djiba and smock and hung them, reverently as vestments of a rite, in the wardrobe with the tulips on one panel.

Then corsets—could anyone have dreamt that such delight lay in a squeezed-in waist? She laced the unaccustomed flesh tighter than ever before out of sheer bravado, bringing a pink flush of exertion which necessitated a touch of powder. Followed silk stockings, high-heeled French shoes, frilly petticoat, a dream of a gown, and a hat—she had almost forgotten how to put on a hat in this enchanted land where one wore none, and this one forced the rearrangement of her hair in a saucy fashion.

She laughed in the glass at the vision of youth and prettiness she saw. True, she had almost, by fasting and rigours of soul and wardrobe, attained beauty, for which prettiness was a poor exchange, but she could not live on the heights for ever, even with Perceval.

Then came the flagrant joy of walking to the station in impertinent Louis heels, along wide streets planted in communist spirit with fruit trees. She even gloated in imagination over the neighbours' whisperings of the backsliding of Sister Cecily, but, as a matter of fact, very few even recognised the rather colourless Mrs. Waterson in this dainty vision of youth.

There is a telegraph wire to the Garden City, although stockbrokers are not encouraged there, and Cecily composed this truly sinful telegram to the male companion of her youthful escapades: "For Heaven's sake, meet me at the Trocadero at one. Cecily Waterson."

Then, because of the reflection on Perceval, she deleted the first three words and took the London train.

London! The smell of it, the sound of it. The sight of all the dear, unintense street people in their garments of shoddy, turned out by sweated labour! The workmen who toiled at machines, the plutocrats who employed them, the middlemen who waxed fat . . . all these things, anathema maranatha, did her soul welcome. She sniffed the sooty air (smokeless coal only allowed in the Garden City). She took a taxicab. Motors were the brutal Juggernauts of material capitalism, or something that sounded like that. And there on the Trocadero threshold was that dear, brainless Philistine of a Billy, who never had a thought outside his halfpenny daily.

Billy needs no description—he was simply the Opposite that every woman flies to at some moment of her life for consolation. It is rather hard lines on the Opposite usually, and this particular Billy, after a glorious meal, during which Cecily's charm and humour had bathed him in a flood of sunshine, was a little stunned at being suddenly told to go.

"But . . . mayn't I see you into a taxi?"

"No," said Cecily, who, after an ample and meaty lunch, had suddenly discovered someone she knew at a far table.

"No, you've been a dear Billy, but good-bye for now."

"And may I come and see you at the freak house?"

Cecily giggled unaccountably.

"It may not be such a very freak house as you think," she said. "Good-bye."

And as Billy departed, Cecily looked again meditatively at the far table, where, eating grilled beef-steak aux champignons, sat, unmistakably, her husband.



"They were entirely conscious of the picture made by the room and by themselves in it."

There were issues involved, so Cecily sat down for a moment. Which would tend the more to a joyful and self-respecting life—that together they should ethereally starve and in secret take their stolen bread apart; that she should fly and keep the guilty secret of her frivolous clothes? Or that she should surprise him in the act of eating meat, and in that second of spurious advantage reap revenge for the months during which she had sat at his feet inferiorly and learnt.

Or . . . ? And in her decision Cecily proved that she had come a long way past the suburban butterfly in knowledge of Art and Life. For she sat demurely still and let Perceval, on the way from his (presumably) leguminous lunch, discover her. It was a struggle, but the look in his eyes was a reward as he sat down in Billy's obliterated place.

"You know, it was this human little person I fell in love with," said he, when

meat hankerings had been mutually confessed and housekeeping put upon a new basis. "If I had wanted a hungry yearner, I should have married a Chelsea art student; there are hundreds of them."

Cecily sat aghast.

"I couldn't say anything, because you were working so hard, and all to please me. But I do prefer you in frills, to be truthful."

The shock of finding her idol's feet of clay was softened to Cecily by the relief of finding that she could now step off her pedestal and lay away her halo.

The Garden City, of course, has long given them up as Lot's Wives and Compromisers. But pedestals and halos are uncomfortable to live on and in, and the Watsonsons are well nourished and joyful, which is all that matters.



## NANCY'S RIVER-BELLS.

**O**N the bridge o' Sundays,  
 Pretty as a flower,  
 Nancy waits till church-bells  
 Chime at morning hour;  
 Hark'ning how the river  
 Cools the sultry day:  
 Little streams a-dimpling clear, over Dartmoor way!

'Minds her of the Psalm-tune  
 When she hears its laughter:  
 "Singers go before," it tells,  
 "Minstrels follow after;  
 In the midst the damsels  
 With the cymbals play";  
 Little streams a-dancing fast, over Dartmoor way.

Seems to bubble louder  
 When the bells begin  
 Ringing over Church-lane  
 Calling Nancy in;  
 Moorland water sprinkled  
 Her on christ'ning-day:  
 Silver fonts amid the ferns, over Dartmoor way.

On the bridge o' Sundays,  
 Pretty as a flower,  
 Nancy hears the church-bells  
 Chime from yonder tower:  
 Hark! from mossy belfry,  
 Tor and boulder grey,  
 River-bells are clashing too—over Dartmoor way!

ALICE E. GILLINGTON.

# THEY CALLED IT LOVE.

BY OWEN OLIVER.



On a spring morning of the year 2063, four persons stood at a plain grey table, in a plain grey room of the London Hospital. One was an old, old man, whom they called "Arch-Councillor," or

briefly, "Arch." The second was the Chief Physician, a tall, thin, well-featured man of about thirty-five. The other two were women physicians, an elder and a younger. All four were dressed alike, in plain grey garments, divided at the legs; and all four had pale, greyish faces, as expressionless as masks.

The Chief Physician mixed crystals and essences in little vessels, until he had made a tiny glassful of bright yellow liquid. When he and the women had each tested a portion of it, he handed the glass to the Arch.

"It will give life or death," he stated, speaking as if life and death were nothing to him.

They approached a couch where a young girl lay inertly. Her features were rigid, but they had a look more lifelike than theirs, a look as if animation had been, or might be.

The Chief Physician opened her mouth with a pair of glass tongs. The Arch leaned on her pillow with one hand and poured the draught between her lips.

After a few seconds her fingers twitched, and then her face. Presently she drew her arms and legs in and out convulsively. Then she shuddered. Her hands plucked aimlessly at her gown, tore little fluffy fragments from it.

"Life?" the younger woman suggested.

"Reflex action," the Chief Physician corrected.

The girl shuddered again, and her fingers closed upon her long hair. The elder woman unclosed them carefully, but without tenderness.

The girl's lips opened slightly. A slow groaning sound came from them. Tears

welled from under her closed eyelids. The younger woman pointed to the tears.

"What are they, Arch?" she asked, in a low, unmoved voice. Their voices were dull and expressionless, like their faces.

"They called them tears," the Arch answered.

"They served to remove dust and foreign matter from the eyes," the Chief Physician explained.

A faint colour grew upon the girl's cheeks. The Chief Physician felt her pulse, listened to her heart, peeped under her eyelids.

"She lives," he announced.

The girl opened her eyes and blinked through the tears. "Mother!" she murmured. "Mother!"

She tried feebly to brush the tears aside with her hands.

"Is it over?" she asked faintly. "The operation?"

"It is over," the Arch told her.

She closed her eyes and laughed hysterically under her breath.

"Why does she do that?" the younger woman asked.

"They called it emotion," the Arch stated. "It was purposeless."

"Have I slept long?" the girl asked wearily.

"One hundred and fifty-seven years," the Arch told her.

She raised herself unsteadily on one elbow and stared at the strange people and the strange room.

"Mother!" she called, in a frightened tone. "Mother!"

"Your mother is dead," said the Arch.

"Dead!" screamed the girl. "Dead! It is not true! It *can't* be true! *Mother!*"

The mask-like faces turned to the Arch.

"They mourned the dead in those days," he explained, "and sometimes they said what was not. Especially they printed it in their newspapers. There was a case of this in my own recollection. It was the first execution by somnite."

"Mother!" the girl screamed. "Mother! Elsie! Nurse! Doctor! It isn't true what he says! It isn't true!"

"Everything that is said now is true,"



the Arch assured her. "Your doctors found that the knife would not cure you, only Nature. So they put you in a trance with morovite, which had just been discovered. Nature has taken a hundred and fifty-seven years over the cure. Your acquaintances died at threescore years and ten, according to the habit of their days. They are all dead."

The girl clutched frantically at the arm of the younger woman.

"Dead?" she wailed. "Everyone! Won't you comfort me?"

The woman looked down upon her tear-stained, quivering face without movement of her own sphinx-like features.

"What does she mean, Arch?" she asked.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Arch-Councillor waited in the Chief Physician's study, smoking a cigarette through a long tube resting upon a wire stand, which held medicated cones over the lighted end and the mouthpiece to absorb the fumes. He put it aside when the Chief Physician entered.

"She is sleeping from exhaustion," he announced. "Her vitality has sunk nearly eleven degrees. I had no idea that the emotions were so dangerous to life."

"They could not be otherwise," the Arch protested. "All activity wears out organisms. The activity necessary for rational life destroys our bodies in from 130 to 150 years. The activity wasted in these useless emotions reduced the period by half. This should be common knowledge."

The Chief Physician drew another wire stand towards him and sat down and smoked a heap of tobacco in a brazier under a cone.

"The gradual wear and tear of primitive feeling is described in all the text-books, of course," he stated; "but I had not realised that it could produce a violent effect at any particular moment. It appears to act upon the heart. She will die if this irrational excitement continues."

The Arch lit another smoking-tube.

"Cannot you prevent it?" he demanded.

"I could remove the emotions by anti-sentients."

"Could you not give her small doses, and merely reduce the emotions in quantity?"

"No. Their quality would be affected. You could not regard them as reliable samples of primitive emotion."

"Then she must die," the Arch-Councillor decided calmly. "Specimens of emotions are necessary to my investigations. I am not moved by idle curiosity as to a barbarous

past; but from the past we learn the future. The future is millions of lives, and hers is only one."

"And that irrational," said the Chief Physician. "You will obtain the sanction of the Council, of course?"

"Yes." The Arch fixed his eyes upon the wall, which was grey, like most things in the rational world. They had arrived at the exact shade, by careful experiment, as causing the least distraction of thought by sense. "How many days is she likely to remain available for study?"

"Three or four. She will suffer."

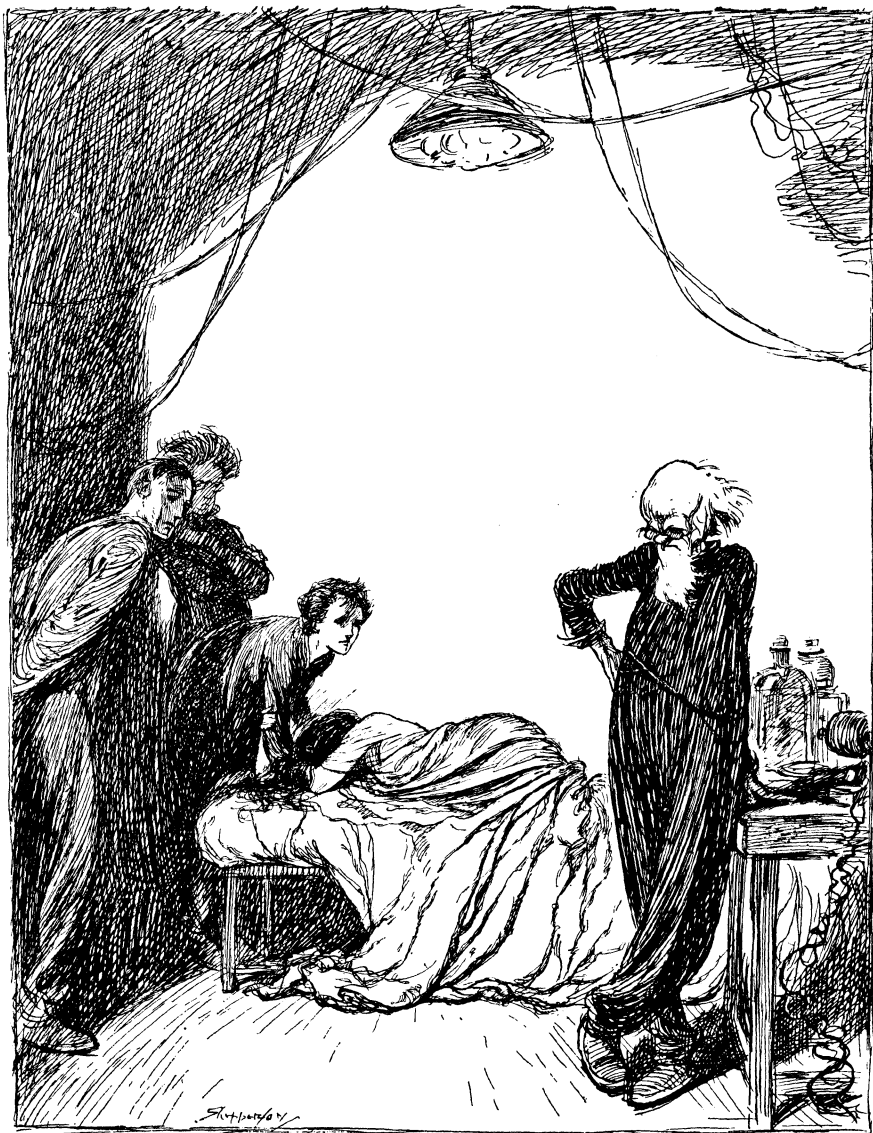
"Mankind are many to suffer, and she is only one. Could not the outbursts be lessened, and her life consequently prolonged—it is important—by the simulation of emotion in those about her? I gather that her excitement is largely due to the absence of anything of the kind in her surroundings."

The Chief Physician took up a little crystal ball and gazed fixedly at it; a "thought-focus," it was termed.

"I fear we know too little about feeling to simulate its expression," he said. "It would be easier to reproduce some of the physical conditions of her times. I have read that emotion was influenced by colour and odour. We might get some coloured articles from the Museum for her room."

"Yes," the Arch agreed. "You might try flowers also. They grow a few in the Museum gardens. From the curious species of ancient literature called 'poetry' I gather that the emotions attached with some strength to flowers; although from the crude philosophy of the Victorian era it would rather appear that they were due chiefly to touch. You could tell a nurse to put her arm round the woman. They termed it embracing. The Council will sanction the higher emoluments given for infectious and unpleasant duties. I still think that something might be done in the way of simulating emotion. For example, it seems to have been indicated by certain forms of address. 'My dear' was, I believe, a common phrase. I'll tell the Chief Reader of Antiquities to look it up, and let you know. Anyhow, you must do your best to keep her alive and emotional for a month. You are relieved from other duties. She is the only subject from whom we can gain first-hand knowledge, remember."

"First-hand knowledge," the Chief Physician mused, when the Arch-Councillor had gone. "Ye-es; but the only first-hand knowledge of feeling is to feel. If I diminished the anti-sentients in my diet, I



"Dead!" she wailed."

might experience some of those emotions myself. No one need know; and—I'll risk it!"

He gazed at the thought-focus for five minutes. Then he walked to a telephone and called up the Museum, and asked for specimens of ancient drapery and flowers.

"Not too vivid," he directed, "and the flowers should not be strongly odorous."

## II.

THE girl turned her head and smiled over the back of her chair when the Chief Physician entered.

There was a pale, pink ribbon in her grey gown (she had refused to wear the divided costume) and a bunch of pale flowers on the table beside her. Two pictures borrowed from the Museum made an oasis of colour in the desert of the grey walls. There was also a screen adorned with flaming yellow birds; but she had thrown a grey cloth over it, to spare her visitor's eyes.

The Chief Physician contorted his features in imitation of the emotion of greeting (he had studied it from ancient prints) and held out his hand. He had read of

hand-shaking, and she had shown him how to do it.

"It is kind of you to come so often, doctor," she told him, with a little pink smile.

"Kind?" he asked doubtfully. "*What* kind?"

The girl laughed softly.

"It is my turn to ask questions," she asserted. "You promised to tell me all about your grey world when I was stronger; and to-day I walked in here quite alone. Don't I look well, doctor?"

The Chief Physician regarded her intently. There was a glimmer in the calmness of his eyes, as if behind them something was coming to life. He had reduced the anti-sentiments somewhat rashly of late.

"You look—like your flowers," he told her. He had come to regard her colouring without displeasure. "I will answer your questions."

She leaned forward with a finger-tip touching her lips.

"First," she said, "what is your name? You have never told me."

"My name," he said, "is C A F Q 5 5-R 4 0 8 1 N."

The girl laughed merrily. The Arch had noted, as the result of his study of her, that laughter was the prevailing form of Victorian emotion. He had recorded several specimens of the sound with the phonograph, and taken three series of living pictures illustrating the curious contortions of feature which accompanied it. He had also ascertained by the Vitometer the exact amount of energy wasted in its production.

"A B C and all the rest!" she said. "How funny! It is like a convict!"

"What is a convict?" he asked.

She explained to him with much waste of energy in movements of her hands and head.

"We have no convicts now," he told her. "If people are unworthy, they are removed; but that is not often. Everybody wishes to do what is right. And what is 'funny'?"

She gave him another animated explanation.

"I understand," he stated at last. "Funny was what you did not expect. *We* always know what to expect. So nothing is funny now."

"*You* are funny," she contradicted; "and your name is."

"No," he denied. "My name is not funny, when you understand it. It tells you just what to expect. C means that I am of the third rank—the next below councillor.

A means that I am a male adult. F means that I am a doctor. Q indicates my degrees and distinctions in the profession. 55 tells that I am fifteen-sixteenths of English descent, and one-sixteenth Scotch, and was born in London. R is my letter in the schedule of personal characteristics. 4081 is my individual number. N shows that I am not married, nor, at present, designated for marriage. The numbers are unalterable. The letters change, if necessary, to correspond to the facts. So, you see, my name is always rational. *Your* name is 'funny.' Maud Mordaunt means nothing; and I suppose it never changed?"

"It would have changed if—I married. Then I should have taken my husband's name. Mrs. Something Something—Maud Something."

"I see. You would keep the 'Maud' to show that you were not your husband?"

"Oh!" she cried. "But you *are* funny!"

"Otherwise," he continued, "you would lose your identity."

"Yes," she admitted; "but I shouldn't mind, because—because I should have—have liked him, I suppose. Don't people nowadays?"

"Marry? Certainly; if they are selected by the Sub-Council for Futurity."

"Does the Sub-Council ask if they want to?"

"They want to do what is right, of course."

"But don't they—care for one another?"

The Chief Physician passed his hand over his forehead. He had imitated the trick from her originally, but it had become almost automatic. The waste of energy, he reckoned, would shorten his life by about a day.

"I am not sure what you mean," he confessed; "but I believe they acquire an idea of companionship—or the reverse."

"Oh!"—she leaned forward—"is that *all*?"

"What else could there be?" he asked.

"Have people no care for one another?" she cried. "No care at all?"

She held out her hands in a desperate gesture. He shook first one and then the other. He thought it must be the fashion of her days, and he had found it efficacious in arresting the particularly undesirable emotion formerly known as "tears."

"People are useful to one another," he stated.

"Useful! *Useful!* Doctor, you have been very kind to me; but for your kindness I should have died in this cold, grey world. If I died, wouldn't you *care*?"

The Chief Physician passed his hand over his forehead again.

"If you were dead," he said slowly, "you *would* be dead, and it would be useless to think about it. While you are alive, I regard such an event as undesirable; but I do not understand what you mean by 'care,' or 'kind.'"

"Try to understand," she begged. "Try!"

"I will consider anything you say very carefully," he promised.

She gave a little sigh of eagerness.

"When you give me flowers," she said, "that is kind. I feel pleased because you have given them to me. I look at them every few minutes, carry them with me when I go from room to room. *That* is caring."

"I see," he said thoughtfully. "You 'care' for the flowers."

"Yes, yes. But I care far more for the kindness of the giver. I thought you meant to be kind; but if you don't— You shake hands with me as if you did. Doctor, haven't you any feeling of—of friendship?"

"Friendship?" He considered laboriously. "I suppose you allude to what we call 'preferences,' by which I mean the valuing of an object above its rational value. They are not a justifiable ground of action, and we endeavour to remove them by an increased use of anti-sentiments, but—I think I 'prefer' you to be here, if that is what you mean."

"I mean— Suppose I went? Would you feel that—that something had gone?"

Her hands moved restlessly. He shook them again, as an antidote to emotion.

"If you went, I should *know* you were gone," he said. "I am not sure if you would call it *feeling*; but I should 'prefer' you not to go away from me. In fact—you were speaking of marriage?"

"Yes?" She breathed quickly.

"It seems to me that you would be useful as a wife; and also, if you do not condemn such a weakness, that I should prefer you to other women. I thought of suggesting it to the Council. They can judge better than we; but as you look upon these matters so differently, I ask you first if you would—if you would 'care' for me—like you do for the flowers?"

"Oh!" the girl cried. "I *should*, if— if you were *sure* about the 'preference'!"

The Chief Physician took out his thought-focus and studied it gravely.

"I seem to feel it distinctly when we shake hands," he pronounced.

She held out both hands, and he took them.

"I think," he suggested, "it might help if I held them for a considerable time. Do you mind?"

"I do not mind," said the girl. "Won't you try to feel a little about things? About me? Isn't it possible?"

He squeezed her hands very tightly.

"It is possible," he owned. "But to make myself feel I should have to cease using the anti-sentiments prescribed by law. The penalty is capital; and if you reported the matter to the Council—which, of course, would be your duty—"

The girl gave a little hurt cry.

"I would rather die myself than hurt you," she told him. "Can't you see that I—'prefer' you?"

She put one of his hands against her cheek for a moment. A feeling of preference ran up his arm and startled—almost frightened—him. He had diminished his anti-sentient diet to one-third, instead of two-thirds, that morning, and he thought that some terrible emotion, destructive of life, was about to come. He found, however, that the feeling was not painful; only as if the eyes of the girl drew him towards her. It was like an enlarged idea of preference, he decided; and it indicated quite plainly that she would not tell the Council.

"I have not taken the full quantity lately," he confessed. "Would it, in your opinion, be injurious to me if I discontinued them altogether for a time?"

"What are they?" she asked.

"They are those elements of food which remove the microbes of unreasonable activity. Consequently they prolong life; double it, practically. You might live to a hundred and fifty years, if you took them."

The girl held her head high.

"What is the use of life," she asked, "if life is not worth living? Life without tears and laughter! Life without—preferences!"

She leaned towards him with her eyes shining.

"Are you *sure* that you 'prefer' me?" she asked. "Are you *quite* sure?"

He took up the thought-focus, but she snatched it from him and turned his face to look in her eyes. He found, to his surprise, that he could focus the question better there.

"Yes," he said. "I prefer you, my dear."

She laughed, and wiped her eyes on his sleeve, still holding to his hands.

"Why," she said, "do you call me that?"

"Isn't it right?" he asked. "I learnt it from a book."

She laughed again, a sweet, crying laugh that the Arch had not caught in his phonograph.

"Learn it from me," she said, "my dear!"

### III.

THE grey-faced Council of Life and Death sat, like statues, upon their grey thrones, and the Chief Physician stood before them with his arms folded. There was a tinge of colour on his cheeks, and his eyes seemed alive, unlike theirs.

"C A F Q 5 5 R 4 0 8 1 N," said the Arch-Councillor, "you are accused of abstinence from anti-sentients, to the detriment of your rational faculties and the shortening of your life."

"I have abstained from anti-sentients," he answered.

"You are also accused of inciting others to like abstinence, through the public and medical press, well knowing that such conduct would tend to shorten life."

"What life lost in length it would gain in breadth."

"That was a point for the Council, not for individual judgment."

"I knew that the Council would never admit the gain, unless experiment proved it."

"Mankind experimented upon the subject for thousands of years. You know the results?"

"The results of feeling cannot be known, only felt."

"Have you anything further to say before we judge you?"

"Only that you will judge in ignorance, not knowing what you have lost. If I forfeit the rest of my life, which should be a hundred years, the last few weeks will have been worth them all."

The Arch-Councillor turned to the rest of the Seven.

"Have you any questions to ask the accused?" he demanded.

They answered in the negative, one by one. He motioned the Chief Physician to a seat at the far end of the room. After a few minutes' deliberation, he summoned him again.

"Your life is dangerous to the race," he said. "It must therefore cease. The Council allow you one week to put your affairs in order. Recognising your past

services, they will grant you any reasonable request."

The Chief Physician bowed.

"I ask to be relieved of the use of anti-sentients during the week," he said, "and that the same favour may be accorded to the unnamed woman formerly known as Maud Mordaunt. I also ask to be allowed to marry her."

"It is granted," said the Arch-Councillor.

\* \* \* \* \*

The girl was listening with the door ajar for the Chief Physician to return. She flung herself into his arms when he entered.

"Tell me," she begged. "Tell me."

He stroked her hair and kissed her on the lips, a wonderful fashion that he had learnt from a bygone story.

"I die in a week," he stated, "my dear."

She clung to him for a long time silently.

"Is there no appeal?" she asked at length.

"I can appeal to the world before I am executed; but the law is clear, and appeal is quite useless."

"No, no. It would at least delay the sentence and give us longer together. It would be months before they could vote, all over the world."

He smiled tolerantly. He had learnt to smile a little.

"We have thought-machines," he stated, "which can record the votes of everyone in the world in a few minutes. They would all support the Council, naturally."

"The Council are fiends!" she cried passionately.

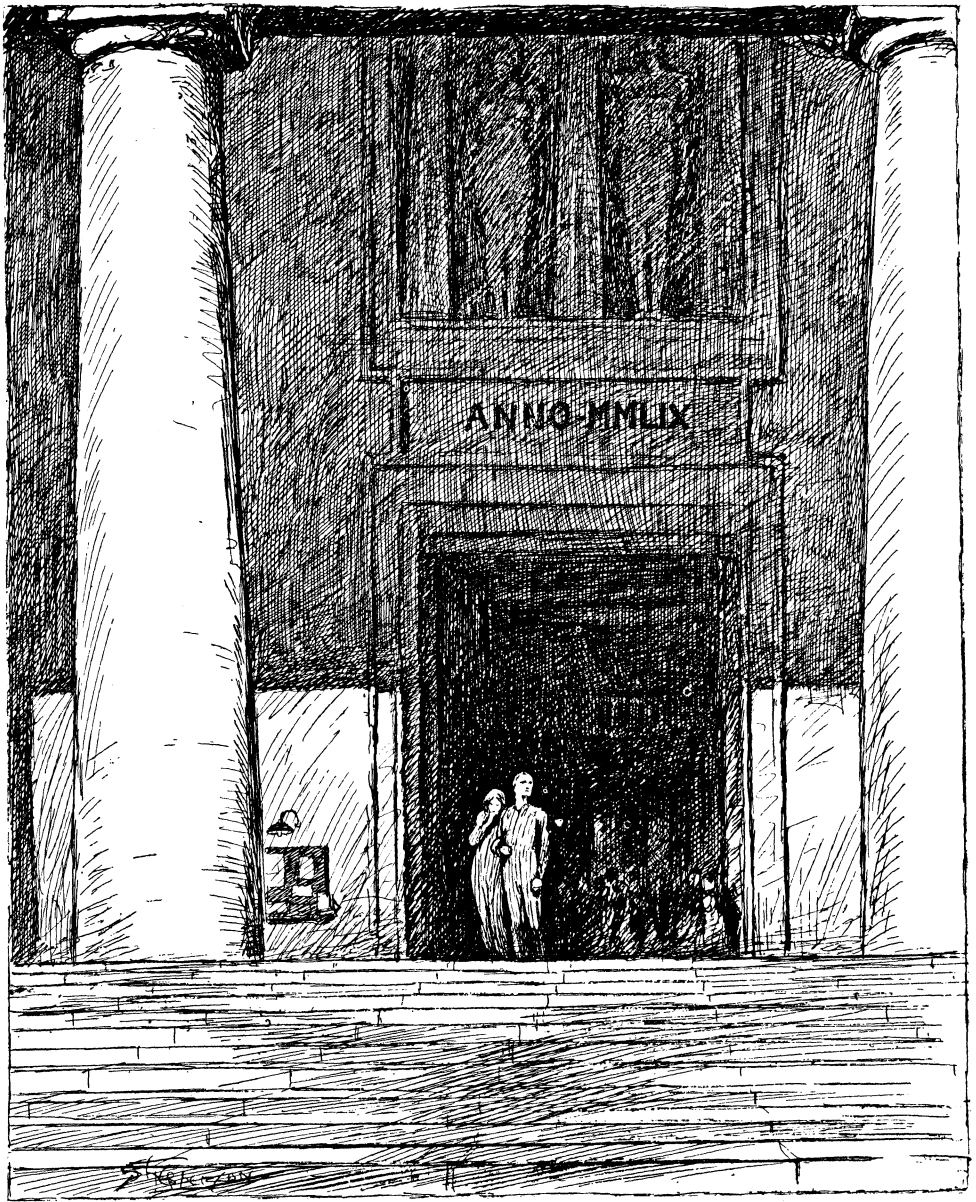
"I do not know what fiends are," he said, "but the Council are just and merciful. I may marry you first, and we are not compelled to take anti-sentients during the week. You must take them immediately afterwards. They will remove your—'grief,' I think you call it."

"I shall die when you do," she told him firmly. "There will be no afterwards—here. There was another life, they taught in my days; and perhaps— But you do not believe in those things."

He sat on a grey sofa—she had draped the head with a coloured rug—and drew her to him.

"When our feelings went," he said, "we lost God. But now you shall teach me to find Him!"

She taught him in the quaint words of an archaic volume that he had borrowed for her from the Museum library. They found it



"She went on with her lover, out of the great door."

in the great room labelled Superstitions and Mythology. Presently she came to the words : " For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife " ; and she smiled up at him, and he smiled down on her.

" Your God knew more than the Council," he declared. " Will you marry me now, my dear ? "

" With all my heart," said the girl ; and

she rose and took his arm, and they went and were married. She had put one white rose in his jacket and another in her hair, but the roses on her cheeks were many and pink. The Registrar flushed a little, too, when she looked at them holding hands.

" You will be very useful to each other," she said, " and I wish that your time were longer."

The girl took the Registrar in her arms



and kissed her firmly ; and when they had gone, the Registrar sat down on her grey stool and rocked herself to and fro, and cried.

"I want—something !" she sobbed.

For the anti-sentients could not take the curiosity from a woman ; and when she had read the Chief Physician's articles, she had discontinued them, to see what would happen.

#### IV.

THE Chief Physician and his wife were sitting close together when the summons came to the Hall of Judgment. They held to one another silently for a few moments. Then he raised her face with his hand and looked at her.

"No," she answered his eyes. "Do not ask me to live when you have gone. It would not be life."

"No," he agreed. "It would not be life." They would give her the anti-sentients, he knew.

They went together down the stairs. The doctors and nurses gathered round them in the Hall. They, too, had experimented and grown human, learnt to laugh and smile. And now they learnt sighs and tears. For none can have the joy of life without the sorrow.

"You have taught us to live," one said.

"If the Council know, we shall die," said another.

A third wrung her hands and wailed that life was vain, for death would end it all.

"Death is not the end," the girl told them ; and when they questioned her, she gave them the faded book from the Museum lumber-room.

"It tells of another country," she said, "*afterwards*—the country of God !"

"Are you going there ?" one asked.

"We are going there," she said ; and she went on with her lover, out of the great door.

A silent crowd waited outside the hospital gates. The girl shrank from them, for she had not been out in the strange world before, and their upturned faces were like a cold, grey sea, and their clothes were grey, and the plain, straight houses—everything !

"It is we who shall live !" she cried. "These are dead, and all your world. It is better to die !" Her voice broke suddenly. For the sun shone on the edge of a cloud, and the words of an old poet came to her : "The warm precincts of the cheerful day." There was still the light to leave—the warmth and the light !

She turned her face upon her lover's shoulder, and would not look at the grey forms around ; but he regarded them intently, and stopped by one who held out her hand furtively and pressed it.

"She was my sister," he whispered, putting the world in the past tense. "*She* has learnt, and so have others. Their hearts have changed ; but they made their faces grey with powder, fearing the Seven."

"They will vote by their hearts, not their faces," the girl said eagerly.

"They are only a few out of the few who have read my writings," he answered. "Most of the people would not read them ; and most of those who read would condemn them. There is no hope, my dear."

But the girl looked hopefully at the grey faces. Sometimes she saw a spot of pink or white, and sometimes the streak of a tear, and then she smiled.

A woman bent and kissed her skirt as she passed.

"There is one," she said.

A man pulled the woman hastily away, for fear any should see.

"He cares for her," the girl said.

Another man held a crippled child on his shoulder, so that the boy should see them pass.

"He cares for the child," she whispered.

Another whispered in the Chief Physician's ear : "Appeal ! Appeal !" A young woman, hiding herself in a shawl, pressed a few flowering weeds into the girl's hand.

"*She* cares," she whispered.

"There are millions who do not care," the Chief Physician told her. "There is none can help us—none !"

"There is God !" she cried. "God !"

"Ah !" he said. "But He is not here."

As if any could know the whereabouts of God !

They turned the corner of a street, and the great Hall of Judgment towered over them, a thousand feet high and a thousand feet through, a great hemisphere of marble that shone grey in the sun ; for it was grey like the rest of the world. But the stairs that led to the Platform of Doom were white, to show that the grey world ended there.

The Chief Physician stopped at their foot and put his arm round the girl.

"Will you still come ?" he asked. "It is—death !"

She smiled up at him, and they went on together. There were none to stop her, for none had thought that any would go with

the doomed, and none dared follow up the white stairs.

They passed through a long, white tunnel and came out on the Platform of Doom in the centre of the great Hall. The grey people of higher rank sat all round in circles and galleries; and before them on grey thrones sat the Seven. A little white pathway led from the platform to a white marble cupola. Death came within it—silently. The Arch-Councillor pointed there.

"Go!" he told the Chief Physician.

A woman's cry rang out sharply from an upper row. The anti-anti-sentient had found, it seemed, a single disciple.

The Chief Physician faced the Seven.

"I appeal to the people," he said.

There was a moment's hush. Then the Arch-Councillor touched a knob, and a gentle humming sound began.

"It calls the world to judgment," the Chief Physician told the girl.

"It is but a little sound," she protested.

"Everyone can hear it everywhere," he assured her.

After a few minutes the sound ceased. Then the Arch-Councillor spoke to a little box, like a grey writing-slope, on the table

before him. It was the World-voice, the Chief Physician whispered, and sounded all over the earth; and though the Arch-Councillor scarcely raised his voice above a whisper, they heard every word.

"C A F Q 5 5 R 4 0 8 1 M appeals for life," he said. "He is convicted by the British Council of Life and Death, under the

first law of the Universal Constitution, of abstaining from anti-sentients, and of inciting others through the press to do so.

"The facts are not in dispute, but he challenges the law.

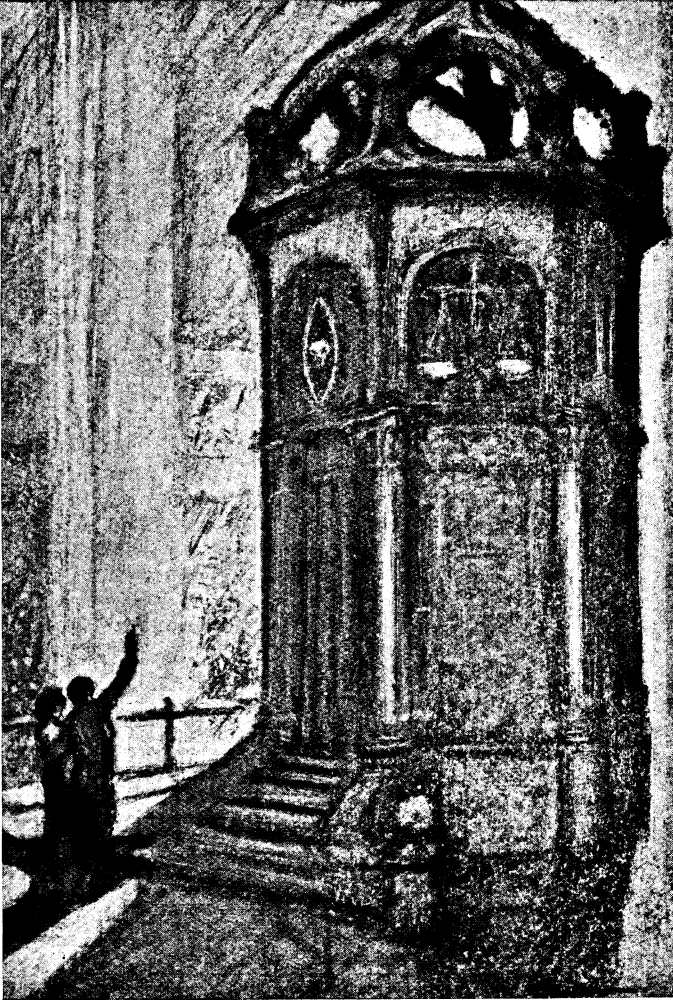
"The ground of the law, as all should know, is that anti-sentients prolong life from a b o u t seventy years to about 140 years, by limiting vital activity to rational and life-preserving functions.

"The convicted man admits this, but alleges that the non-reasonable functions are a valuable

form of life, so that their disuse merely increases its breadth at the expense of its length.

"He represents that the value of these functions could only be judged by experience, and that he aimed at obtaining this by experiment.

"The Council consider that sufficient



"The Chief Physician pointed to a third column . . . that had risen golden . . . to the topmost dome."

experience of this point was gained in the past history of mankind; that the non-rational impulses were proved to be disastrous to the race; and that any further experiment was forbidden by the Constitution.

"You will vote for life or death when the word is given."

The Arch-Councillor turned from the "World-voice" to the Chief Physician.

"Is the case fairly stated?" he asked.

"Yes," said the Chief Physician.

"No!" cried the girl. "No!"

"The question does not concern you," the Arch-Councillor told her.

"It does," she insisted. "For if he dies, I shall die also."

The Seven consulted together. Then the Arch-Councillor answered her.

"You may speak," he said calmly.

She clenched her hands against her breast and drew a deep breath.

"The feelings which you condemn, and do not know," she said, "do more than increase the breadth and depth of life. They promise us another life—a life after death. They show us God!"

"God?" asked the Arch-Councillor. "Who is He?"

"The Power that rules this world, and every other world, this life and life hereafter. A Power"—she swept out her arms—"that is greater than you and the Seven, and all to whom you have spoken."

"Then," said the Arch-Councillor, "He can rule, if He thinks fit, the voting." And he turned again to the World-voice.

"Your decision," he announced, "involves also the unnamed woman, who has survived under morovite, from the earlier world, and who possesses the non-rational feelings to such degree that she desires to die with the man who is convicted. The Council assent, considering her existence dangerous. You can judge the consequences of the non-rational feelings by her action."

"She alleges that these feelings promise a further life after death, and evince the existence of a Supreme and Everlasting Power termed God, Who rules the Universe. As such a Power could intervene if It chose, there are no rational grounds for considering it in your voting. The vote will now be taken."

"Where do they vote?" the girl whispered with a shudder. "How?"

The Chief Physician showed her two grey columns of hollow glass, one on either side of the platform, and rising to the top of the huge dome.

"The votes are recorded in them," he

whispered, "by a change of colour. White for life and black for death. Look!"

She looked; and the column to the left blackened swiftly foot by foot, from the stem upwards; and the column to the right said "Life" slowly, in inches of white. It was white only to her waist when the black column was ten times her height.

"They do not understand," she cried. "Cannot I tell them? Is there none to help us? None?"

"None," said the Chief Physician, "unless—but I think there is no God!"

The girl clasped her hands and lifted them and looked up, moving her lips.

"God!" she prayed softly. "Dear God!"

The black column and the white column still mounted swiftly and slowly; the girl dropped her hands—And suddenly the Chief Physician pointed to a third column behind them, that had risen golden, like a column of sun, to the topmost dome.

"Your God has heard," he said brokenly. "Heard! He is greater than the Seven!"

The girl was lying on the grey sofa in their room when next she remembered, and the Chief Physician was bending over her, with the first tears of his life in his eyes. When she was well enough to speak, he sat close beside her and told her the rest.

The golden column recorded the vote of those who objected to the terms of reference, he said; and till he had turned his head he had forgotten that such a vote could be given. It had prevailed over the others, and so there must be a fresh voting; and there had been other votes, while she lay in his arms in the faint, to settle the issue. And the decision was that the world would discontinue the use of anti-sentients for a week; and then, when they knew the worth or unworth of the feelings, they would vote again for his and her life or death.

"I do not fear *this* voting," he told her.

But when the week was over, there was no voting. The crowd cheered them through the streets, and caught at their hands, and held their garments as they went to the Hall; and the Arch-Councillor met them and led them, one by each hand, up the main steps and along the great aisle to the seats of the Seven; and there he offered up thanks for the new knowledge of life that had come to them; and when he had finished, he turned to the girl.

"Dear woman from the bygone world," he said, "how shall I name this new wisdom that you have brought to us?"

"They called it love!" she said.

# GREY LYNX'S LAST HUNTING.

BY CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS,

*Author of "Kings in Exile," "The Backwoodsmen," "The House in the Water," etc.*



GREY LYNX went ahead. His mate, almost as large as he, and even more savage in her lightning ferocity, was at the same time more shy of approaching the habitations of man.

Full of suspicions, but driven by the pangs of midwinter famine, she followed at a little distance, while Grey Lynx stealthily, crouching close to the snow, led the way across the open to the low, snow-muffled outbuildings of the lonely wilderness farm.

He was a strange, sinister figure, this big Canadian lynx, a kind of gigantic, rough-haired cat with the big, broad, disproportionate pads of a half-grown Newfoundland pup, and hind legs and haunches grotesquely overdeveloped as if in imitation of a jack-rabbit. His moon face, stiffly-whiskered, and with a sort of turned-back ruff beneath the blunt, strong jaws, was indescribably wild and savage, lit as it was by a pair of round, unwinking, palely-luminous eyes, and surrounded by sharp ears fantastically tufted. In colour he was all of a shadowy, light grey, faintly toned on back and flanks with a brownish yellow. His grotesque but extraordinarily powerful hindquarters were finished off with a straight stub of a tail, perhaps three inches or four in length. He might, in fact, have looked like a caricature, but for the appearance of power and speed and deadly efficiency which he conveyed, the suggestion of menace in every movement.

Under the necessity of the Hungry Month, the big lynx had visited this clearing once before, prowling as near as he dared, in the first shadows of late afternoon. He had seen in the yard a couple of cows—which were too big to interest him. What was more to his purpose, he had seen some huddling sheep. Then a draught of icy air blowing from the direction of the house had borne to his nostrils the dreaded scent of man, and he

had slunk off hurriedly to his coverts. But those sheep! The smell of them, the remembered relish of a lamb which he had once devoured in the thickets, stung his appetite to madness. Like most of the wild creatures, he had learned, either from instinct or experience, that man was less to be dreaded by night than by day. So, well after nightfall, he had returned to the farm, bringing his ravenous mate with him.

At one side of the yard, startlingly bright in the light of the low moon, stood the settler's house; at the other side, two low, connected barns, with a shed running half-way to the house. The long, black shadows of the buildings stretched nearly across the open space between the farmstead and the woods. The snow was hard packed and frozen, covered with an inch of recent and lighter snowfall, which the winds would presently come and sweep away into the fence-corners. Through the space of shadow Grey Lynx crept like a denser shadow, till he reached the corner of the nearest barn. Here he crouched, making himself as small as possible, while he took a long sniff at one of the cracks in the warped, ill-seasoned, hemlock boarding. Then he turned his head and looked at his mate, who was crouching some ten paces to the rear. As if this was a signal that all was as it should be, she ran lightly forward and crouched again beside him.

From within, besides that warm, distracting, woolly smell, came comfortable rustlings of dry hay, and sounds of chewing, and safe contented breathings. It was obvious that the sheep were in there. Grey Lynx's eyes, piercing and impatient, searched the blank wall before him. There was no entrance from that side. Furtively he led the way round the corner, his mate still keeping a prudent distance. At the edge of the moonlit yard he hesitated. Still there was no opening. Keeping carefully in the shadow, he prowled around to the other corner of the building, but with no better luck. Then, growing more bold, he ventured into the light and crept down the front of the barn, flattening himself to the snow as he

went; his mate, distrustful still, and now growing angry as she began to feel that she had been fooled, peered around the corner and watched him.

Grey Lynx was furious. He had expected to see those sheep still huddled in the yard. Finding that they were inside the barn, he then expected to get in among them by the same way they themselves had entered. Where such fools as sheep could, surely he could go. He knew nothing of doors that closed and opened, so he was puzzled. He drew back and stared up at the roof. Assuredly, the sheep must have got in by way of the roof. He could see no opening up there, however, so he went prowling around the other barn and the shed as well, finding everything shut up tightly against the biting cold. Then he came again to his mate, who was now awaiting him, tail and whiskers twitching with ill-humour, in the shadow behind the first barn.

But Grey Lynx was not yet ready to acknowledge defeat. The roof of the shed was lower than that of the barns. With a tremendous leap he gained it, but only to fall back ignominiously beneath a mass of snow which his claws had disengaged. At the next attempt, however, he got a grip with his front paws upon the roof itself, and so drew himself up, but not without a sharp noise of scraping and clawing. The sudden sound disturbed the hens, roosting inside immediately below the roof, and they set up a shrill cackling of alarm.

Grey Lynx stopped, held himself rigid, and listened with all his ears. Chickens would do him almost as well as sheep—if only he could come at them! He clawed savagely at the roof, but it was new and strong, and he speedily found that there was nothing to be hoped for by that method of procedure. Frantic with baffled eagerness, he ran along the shed and sprang with a magnificent bound to the roof of the barn. At the thud of his landing the cattle stirred and snorted uneasily, and the two horses whinnied with anxious interrogation.

At this instant a window in the farmhouse flew up with a clatter. Grey Lynx turned his flat, cruel face sharply toward the sound. He saw a jet of flame spurt from the window; a crashing thunder shocked his ears, and something hummed viciously close above his head. Fortunately for him, the light of the moon is a deceptive light to shoot by. He left no chance, however, for the settler to try a second shot. With one wild leap he cleared the roof and alighted

on the snow behind the barn. He saw his mate already fleeing, and he followed in long, panic-stricken bounds.

Well within the shelter of the woods, Grey Lynx found his mate awaiting him. She stood with her head turned back over her shoulder, eyeing him dangerously. What she conveyed to him by that look is not with any certainty to be recorded; but it seemed to be unpleasant in its drift, for Grey Lynx turned aside, in a casual way, and pretended to sniff interestedly at the day-old trail of a rabbit. It was difficult, however, to assume an interest for any length of time in anything so hopelessly uninteresting. After a few seconds he wandered off stealthily in search of some fresher trail. His mate, though hot with scorn and disappointment, ranged along within a few leaps of him. In such a famine season it was to the interest of both that they should hunt together, so far as their morose and distrustful natures made it possible.

The stillness of death itself lay on the forest. The very air seemed brittle under the intense cold. The glare of the unclouded moon was glassy, hard, implacable. It seemed to devitalise even the strong, stealthy forms of the gliding lynxes, to change them into a pair of drifting ghosts, which turned their heads from side to side as they went, and flashed from their eyes a pale, blasting fire.

But Grey Lynx had a very unghostly hunger—as had also his mate. Suddenly his unerring eyes detected, under a spreading hemlock, a spot where the snow had been disturbed. To a less keen vision it would have been nothing, but to Grey Lynx it was a clear, unmistakable indication. Swerving sharply from his trail, he pounced upon the little roughness in the snow, and began digging furiously with his forepaws. In a moment he was half buried, for the snow, here in the shelter of the trees, lay softer than in the wind-beaten fields. Sniffing his way by his well-instructed nose, he followed a deep trail which led in towards the trunk of the hemlock; and his mate, meanwhile, drew near and watched enviously. A moment more and his head emerged amid a swirl of fluttering wings and flying snow. In his jaws he held a big cock grouse. The unhappy bird had buried himself in the snow for the night, that he might sleep more warmly than on his roost among the branches. For a second more his strong wings flapped spasmodically, then Grey Lynx crunched the life out of him and fell to his meal.



"If only he could come at them!"



The ill-humoured female crept nearer, crouching with a conciliatory air. But Grey Lynx was not of a gallant or chivalrous tribe, and a single cock grouse is not half a meal for a starving lynx. With a strident snarl he thrust out one great paw in warning. The female stopped, licked her lips hungrily, then turned like lightning and ran up a neighbouring fir-tree. Her ears had caught the sound of a startled twitter which had answered Grey Lynx's snarl. There were snow-buntings resting in that tree. Her iron claws, however, clutching at the bark, announced her coming, and for all her speed the birds escaped her, hopping up with terrified outcry to the topmost slender branches, where she could not go. Smarting with disappointment, she descended the tree, and continued her prowling at a distance of some twenty paces from her selfish partner, who had by this time finished up the grouse.

For perhaps half an hour nothing more happened, and the temper of Grey Lynx's mate grew momentarily more dangerous. It was bad enough to be so hungry as she was, but to be first led into a trap by Grey Lynx and then to see him make a meal before her eyes, this was hardly to be borne. All at once she gave a great leap to one side, turning in the air as she sprang, and came down, with forepaws outstretched and claws wide spread, just at the edge of a snow-draped bush. Out of the corner of her eye she had seen a wood-mouse. With her miraculous speed of action, as of a mighty spring unloosed, she had caught the tiny victim just as it was vanishing under the refuge. It made but one mouthful, to be sure, but it was quite as good as a snow-bunting would have been. She licked her chops, gave Grey Lynx a sidelong look, and crept on.

Slowly the moon rolled up the vitreous sky, shortening the shadows of tree and stump. The forest was more open here, having been recently gone over by the lumbermen. Dense thickets, single trees, ranks of stumps, aisles and colonnades of tall second growth, not yet quite heavy enough for the woodsman's axe, succeeded each other in bewildering confusion. By-and-by, from a hemlock stump just ahead, but hidden by some bushes, came a crisp sound of gnawing. Both lynxes crouched flat, their absurd tails twitching. Then, separating so that one should go to each side of the clump of bushes, they crept upon the heedless gnawer. As they came in sight of him, they stopped. It was a big porcupine, fat, warmly clad, and indifferent alike to foe and frost.

Full well the lynxes knew that this was no quarry for their hunting. But they could not help dallying with the temptation. They stole nearer, their mouths watering. The porcupine went on gnawing the dry hemlock; but when the lynxes were come within a few feet of him, he stopped, put his nose between his forepaws, and erected his needle-pointed quills, till there was nothing of him to be seen but this threatening array. The lynxes crouched flat and eyed him longingly. At last the female, her hunger getting the better of her discretion, stole closer and reached out a prying nose, as if hoping to find some weak point in the scornful rodent's defences. Grey Lynx snarled a warning; but in that same instant the porcupine's tail—a massive member covered with tiniest needles—jerked sharply and just brushed the intruding muzzle. With a spitting yowl, the lynx jumped backwards, two or three slender quills sticking in her nose like pins in a cushion. Paw and rub and wallow as she might, she could not get them out, for their barbed edges held inexorably. All she could do was break them, and go on, with the points rankling like wasp-stings in her tender muzzle. From time to time she would plunge her face in the snow, to allay the torment. And her temper was by no means improved.

All this, however, troubled Grey Lynx not at all. To be sure, the mishap to his mate had cooled his longing for porcupine meat, and he had resumed his quest of safe hunting. But concern for the female's sufferings never entered into his savage heart. She was of importance to him only if they should find some big game—a strayed sheep or a doe, for instance—which they could bring down more surely and more quickly by acting in combination. There was none of that close and firm intimacy which so often appears to exist between the male and female wolf.

In traversing an alley of big spruce stumps, the two came close together, though they continued to pay each other not the slightest attention. A light, dull *pad pad* struck their ears, and both crouched flat. In the next instant a white rabbit shot past them, almost brushing their noses. His great, simple eyes starting from his head with terror, he went by at such a pace that there was no time to strike him down, though the female, who was the furthest from him, made a futile swipe at him with one paw. It was clear that something deadly must be following the rabbit, to cause him such blind panic. Whatever it might be, the lynxes had no



"The unhappy bird had buried himself in the snow for the night."

fear of it. They wanted it. And they waited for it.

And the next moment it came.

It came running soundlessly, nose up on the hot scent, a slim, low, long-bodied, sinuous white beast, with a sharp-pointed head and eyes like two drops of liquid fire. As it shot past him, Grey Lynx made a stroke at it and missed. But in the next fraction of a second the female had pounced. She caught the weasel, with both paws, in mid-leap. Indomitable, it writhed up and fixed its long, fine teeth in her nose. Then her fangs closed about its slender loins, and the fierce life was crunched out of it. With the blood streaming from her nose—which eased, however, for a moment the galling ache of the porcupine barbs—she fell to her meat, growling harshly over it. Grey Lynx, perhaps persuading himself that he had helped at the hunting of this quarry, demanded a share, and seized one of the weasel's hind legs in his teeth. But with a snarl the female struck at him, clawing viciously the side of his head. He was in no anxiety to force matters with so redoubtable an adversary, so, spitting indignantly, he drew off and sat down on his haunches to watch the feast.

The feast was brief. For, though the weasel was a fairly large one, it was by no means so large as the lynx's hunger. Still, when she had finished, and passed her great paw over her face and licked her chest clean of blood, she might have felt fairly comfortable but for that inexorable anguish in her nose.

Not long after this another rabbit bounded forth from a thicket just ahead, and darted straight between them. Both sprang at it, simultaneously, but each baulked the other; and the rabbit, stretched out into a tense, white line of flying fur, shot unscathed from under their claws. Grey Lynx, as it chanced, had been the nearest to the quarry. Choosing to think that he would have made a kill had his mate's interference not thwarted him, he gave vent to his wrath in a buffet, which caught her on the flank and sent her rolling over on the snow. Recovering herself, she faced him for a moment or two with eyes that flamed green, half minded to fly at his throat. Then, thinking better of it, turned away and fell to nosing a mouse-trail.

The trail was none too fresh, but neither was it hopelessly stale. She chose to follow it. Thereupon Grey Lynx, hopeful of something worth while, stole nearer to see what she might be trailing.

Now, it chanced that in this particular

neighbourhood a trapper had been busy. A morsel of frozen fish lay upon the snow. Both prowlers saw it at the same time, and pounced for it. But it was Grey Lynx who reached it first, and he bolted it in one mouthful, while his mate snarled with rage. Sniffing about for other possible fragments, he stepped to one side. There was a muffled click beneath the surface of the snow. Straightway Grey Lynx, doubling himself like a full-drawn bow, and ripping out a screech of panic, sprang into the air, with a steel trap hanging to his left forepaw.

The trap was attached by a chain to a solid wooden balk, too heavy for Grey Lynx to drag. Biting savagely at the strange horror which had clutched him, yowling and spitting, and rolling head over heels, he lost his wits entirely in the madness of his efforts to escape. For a moment the female shrank back, with flattened ears and narrowed eyes, frightened and bewildered. Then, seeming to imagine that there was some treachery to herself in this dreadful and inexplicable performance, she drew nearer, with a menacing growl. The next instant, as if quite beside herself at the sight of such contortions, she gave vent to a mad screech and flung herself at Grey Lynx's throat.

In a moment the two became, as it were, one ball of clinging, tearing, screeching fur and claws. They rolled over and over in the snow, the heavy trap striking them both impartially, the chain now entangling them, now flying loose with a sharp jangle. Blood splattered in every direction, amid spurts of snow and flecks of torn fur. But Grey Lynx, hampered by trap and chain, and weakened alike by terror of the unknown and horror at the incomprehensible fury of his mate, was overmatched from the first. In a few minutes the tense ball seemed to loosen. The maniacal uproar ceased to affront the night, diminishing to a panting growl. Grey Lynx's body straightened out. The female continued to worry it for a few moments. Then, as if suddenly coming to her senses, she stopped, drew off, eyed the mangled and twitching form, and slunk away into the nearest bushes. Here she crouched, as if in terror, and peered out fascinated. At last the shape of what had once been her mate lay quite still. Then, after a little, she crept away, hid herself in a remote thicket, and fell to licking her scars and cleansing her fur. And the outstretched body of Grey Lynx, with cruel eyes half open and staring blankly, stiffened little by little in the still, implacable frost.



THE OLD YEAR NOW AWAY IS FLED,  
 THE NEW YEAR IT IS ENTERED;  
 THEN LET US NOW OUR SINS DOWNTREAD,  
 AND JOYFULLY ALL APPEAR -  
 LET'S MERRY BE THIS HOLIDAY,  
 AND LET US RUN WITH SPORT & PLAY,  
 LEAVE SORROW, LET'S CAST CARE AWAY,  
 GOD SEND YOU A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

OLD CAROL.



# THE BLIND GHOST.

By DORA GREENWELL McCHESNEY.



WHEN first I went to Stag Court, I thought the story of the ghost only one more artistic touch to complete the old-world charm of the place. It was right and fitting that such a house should have

a haunting story to harmonise with the shadows and subdued gleams of the oak panelling and tarnished Spanish leather of the walls, and the portraits which filled the long West Gallery with a sense of presence, intimate yet remote. As the days passed, however, and I grew familiar with the Jacobean mansion, I began to be troubled because the story was for ever an untold one. My friends had a trick of falling silent when I spoke of the legend, and none would even tell me in what shape or seeming the spectre appeared. One thing I did learn from a chance word: the phantom belonged to the house, not to the family. Stag Court had been owned by Royalists in the time of the Civil War, and had only passed into the hands of the Puritan Knightleys after sequestration. Somehow the fact that the ghost had an older claim on the place than had its living owners wrought strangely on my imagination, till I yielded to a fantastic, half-ashamed desire, and begged to pass a night in the "ghost's room." My friends demurred, but I was resolute. I remember that I even pleaded my nationality, confessed to a touch of that passion for ancient deeds and dreams which besets the American, that instinctive homesickness for the past known only to those in part disinherited.

I prevailed in the end, and found myself one evening sitting alone in the ghost's room, waiting, waiting for what I was sure could not happen. There was nothing gloomy or spectral about the beautiful chamber, though for so many years it had been set apart from all the warm, familiar usages of life. The walls were panelled with *intarsia* work, delicate inlaying of wood, such as I have seen often in Continental churches, but never,

I think, in a private dwelling. That must have been the whim of some "Englishman Italianate" in the time of James I. or Charles I., returning from his grand tour with his memory full of foreign fancies. The design was curious and intricate: a series of slender arches, within which, piled in deliberate disarray, were weapons, musical instruments, and drinking-vessels. All round the room were repeated these symbols of war, song, and revelry, yet no two panels were exactly alike. The wood used was in varying shades of warm brown and yellow, which responded readily to the gleam of candles on the chimney-piece and table and the glow of the great fire, so that all the room was steeped in a subdued but friendly light. There were no black and sudden shadows, no rustling folds of arras to cheat the mind into credulity and fear.

I drew my chair up beside the heavy table, which I had pushed away from its central position so that I could see the fire more easily. The seat I had chosen was a stiff, high-backed one, uncompromising in its rigidity. I did not intend to fall asleep and let a dream slip unawares among my memories of the night. Before me lay the three books I had brought—a curious assortment—a volume of Gibbon, chosen for its cool and trenchant scepticism as a sort of rebuke to superstition, "The Professor at the Breakfast Table" for companionship, and a new sensational novel of the kind to be read in breathless haste, in case the long, dark hours should weigh on me. I did not open any of them, but sat studying the elaborate *intarsia*, noting here a lute lying incongruously beside a classical lyre, there a magnificently wrought helmet such as were worn by the Italian *condottieri*, and observing the admirable perspective of the slender arches which framed the piles of spoil. It seemed grievous to abandon so interesting a room merely for sake of a legendary terror, and just as I was thinking so I turned sharply to look behind me.

There, a few paces away, stood the figure of a man, clearly revealed in the soft, even light; I could see every detail of his dress and bearing, and for a few moments I studied

him in an absorption too utter for fear. He was in the garb of King Charles's cavaliers—not buff coat and corslet, but a suit of some rich, dark stuff, of a purple so deep that it was almost black. He wore no scarf nor sword, and his attire was disordered, the collar of delicate lace a little awry, and one of the long cuffs gone. All this I saw unconsciously, remembering it later, as I observed the fine lines of the figure, even though the man stood bending slightly forward, losing something of his height. At the time I was only aware of the face, a face of singular beauty, set in the stillness of desperate effort or endurance, the wide eyes, amber hued, terribly bright and fixed. They did not meet mine, nor did my strange visitant seem conscious of my nearness. He came forward, very slowly and hesitantly, yet with the tension of concentrated purpose in every faltering movement. Close beside my chair he passed, so near that by reaching out a hand I might have touched his cloak or brushed one of the long locks of chestnut hair falling disordered on his shoulders. I felt sure that I could have touched and felt them, for this form beside me was not shadowy, seemed no imponderable essence, but a spirit which mysteriously had gathered to itself something of human form and substance. Even as the thought formed itself in my mind it was grimly confirmed. The advancing figure had struck sharply against the corner of the table, winced, and drawn aside with a piteous, groping gesture. Realisation struck at my heart in a pang of indescribable compassion and terror: the ghost was blind.

My own eyes grew dim for a moment, and when I could see clearly again, he stood beside the chimney-piece, his face turned from me, passing his hands slowly along the smooth surface of the wall. He appeared to follow a straight line, his seeking fingers keeping always a little above the level of his shoulder, moving backwards and forwards, tirelessly yet wearily, from the chimney-piece to the angle of the wall. As I watched, it came home to me that the same blind, futile search had been made night after night, through all the slowly circling years, since that cavalier who stood there in so gallant yet so forlorn a guise had stood in living flesh, a man among men; that it would still be made without truce or rest till the groping hands had achieved their impossible work. It was not only pity for the darkened spirit which moved me, but a sense of the irrevocable and irremediable which concerned

my own soul no less intimately. For one instant of unendurable agony I looked, as he looked, into a black abyss, and saw there, as it were by an inner sight less tolerable than outer blindness, every sin and error of my life laid bare without hope of retrieval or atonement. In that heart-beat I knew what hell might be: the endless, hopeless effort to undo in the darkness evil wrought in the light.

Time is not in such an experience. It might have been moments or hours that I stared at the figure by the panelling. Then sharp on the stillness sounded the crack of a musket. The cavalier flung up his hands like a man mortally stricken, and—I was alone.

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No one asked me questions the next morning, and for a time I asked questions of none. The impression of the night's horror was too vivid, and I understood why those who had undergone the same ordeal took refuge in silence. But as the gloaming drew on, I found that I could not rest. I was sitting in the library, and Alicia, my friend's youngest daughter, a grave, reticent girl, was in the deep window-seat, bending to catch the last fading light on her book.

"Is nothing known of its story?" I asked abruptly, and did not need to explain of what I spoke.

Alicia turned where she sat, her face in shadow, a twilight glimmer making a halo of her fair hair, and in a low, troubled voice told me all that was recorded or divined. Not many people saw the ghost, and of those who did none had faced a second night in the haunted room. Nothing had ever been found in that room to account for the apparition; the walls had been vainly searched, by daylight, for traces of a hidden treasure or a secret door. It was believed that the phantom was that of a certain Sir Basil —, who had been a Royalist officer in the Civil War. Tradition had much to say of Sir Basil and of his deadly enmity with a lieutenant in his troop, a certain James Howe. Their hostility culminated when a Royalist garrison was betrayed to the Parliamentary soldiers under one Major Sandys, and the suspicion lay most darkly on the two fellow-officers. In the end Howe was convicted of treason, his life spared only that he might be publicly degraded and dismissed from the army. He enlisted again as a common soldier under a feigned name, and, a year later, so the story ran, brought out his enemy,



sorely hurt and unconscious, from the thick of a *mêlée*. Rescuer and rescued were made prisoners, and confined for a time in Sir Basil's own house of Stag Court, which had been seized and garrisoned for the Parliament. There the tale grew vague and confused; but one thing was certain: when Sir Basil came back to life, he was stone blind from the injury he had received in the fight.

Listening, I had to guess at what must have passed between those two men, fellow-soldiers, fellow-prisoners, mortal enemies, both in their different ways maimed beyond recovery. After a time Howe was released or taken to another prison, while Sir Basil remained, a blind captive in his own house. How, helpless as he was, he escaped from his guarded room was never known, but escape he did, and made his way to the panelled chamber which had been his own. There he was found, and, whether by deliberate intention or in the excitement of pursuit, was shot through the heart.

The gleam of the long English twilight had faded from the library before the story was ended, and I sat silent for a while in the gloom.

"Howe was my mother's name," I said then irrelevantly. "May I spend another night in the ghost's room?"

\* \* \* \* \*

If I felt no terror in the actual presence of the phantom on its first coming, I endured a sickness of dread as I waited for its return. I braced myself as if for the assault of bodily pain or peril, sitting stiffly in the big carved chair, gripping its arms with both hands. I made no pretence of reading, though a pile of books lay before me. Everything looked as it had done on my earlier vigil, except that I had pushed the table back to its former place, leaving the way to the chimney-piece free for the passing of that unguided seeker.

Suddenly, in a moment, he was there, moving forward stealthily, one hand outstretched, the beautiful, blind face set and straining. Once again a wave of darkness and horror swept over me, but it ebbed more quickly than before, leaving me forgetful of myself, lost in the sense of another's pain. Perhaps the story I had heard was working in my mind, but it seemed to me rather as though I read by some secret sympathy the thoughts of the tormented spirit beside me, felt the throb of its love and remorse and despair. I knew, though when the intense moment was past I could not explain my knowledge, that

between these two enemies, Sir Basil and his one-time officer, a great and strange friendship had grown in captivity, that for friendship's sake was carried on the desperate, darkling search—for what? Be it what it might, I could no longer endure to watch those delicate hands—such hands as Van Dyck painted—grope patiently along the unrevealing wood. With a girding up of my courage, a pang of passionate sympathy, I rose from my place, lifted a candle, and walked straight towards the wall by which the Royalist's figure yet stood. Shoulder to shoulder with that which was not of earth, I took up the quest which he had made in vain for three hundred years and more. My flesh shrank and cringed, but stronger than my dread was the compulsion of that other's need. Standing there, his anguish entered into me, his love, his remorse—for a sin of which I knew not—his sense of shame and helplessness, and his unswerving resolve to fight down even helplessness and shame. Always his hands moved along the surface of the wall at one level, and where he felt I looked. And there, at the apex of one of the inlaid arches, I saw, under the light of my candle, a tiny disc of slightly darker wood. So small it was as to be scarce visible, while to the touch it was wholly imperceptible. At the sight of it I forgot the terror and mystery which environed me in the sense of discovery. Setting my candle on the chimney-piece, I opened my knife, and pressed the blade hard on the marked spot. No sign at first, then a reluctant groan, and the panel slid a crack aside. I slipped my hand into the aperture, and pressed till the crack widened and a little hidden cabinet lay revealed, holding a handful of papers grey with the dust of generations. With a swimming brain and shaking hand, I drew them out. The dust flew up and blinded me, and the passing dimness of my sight sickened me with a panic. Then the yellowed ink and darkened paper grew clear to me, and I read. First a list of names, then a warrant for taking horses, then one or two documents which seemed to be concerned with lands and revenues. At last a letter, seal and severed silken cord still in place, the few lines of writing damningly plain: final instructions for carrying out the secret surrender already agreed on, addressed to Sir Basil—and signed Ferdinando Sandys.

Sudden loathing of the long-past treachery shook me. Sir Basil, then, had been the traitor and had laid the burden of his guilt on his private enemy. And then, in the revealing darkness and in the spiritual enfranchisement



"Walked straight towards the wall by which the Royalist's figure yet stood."

of captivity, he had come to know and love the man he had undone. What fire of torment must that guilt and that love together have kindled! Small wonder that it had urged him in life, had urged him after death, to that blind, baffled quest for the proof of his own shame and the honour of the foe that had grown a friend.

Now the proof lay clear in my hand, and I turned to confront the seeking spirit. Close to me he stood, every line of his face distinct, stamped with the agony of his long endurance, his ceaseless, frustrate endeavour. I knew that he felt my presence, heard my movement as one still in the flesh might have done, but could not see what I had found nor whether I understood. The blind eyes were straining towards me in a question, a fear, a desperate incredulous hope, the hope that after generations and centuries there should be laid bare—his own dishonour.

I could find no words at first, could find no voice nor breath; then—

"I have found it!" I cried. "Be at peace!" and I saw light break across the darkened face—but of that light I cannot speak.

\* \* \* \* \*

Only a student here and there took any interest in the brief note that appeared in two or three antiquarian journals righting a forgotten wrong and establishing the honour of an obscure soldier dead centuries ago. Even I, who know now that I have the blood of that disgraced Royalist in my veins, cannot care passionately for his late acquittal. It is more to me that an ancient enmity and ancient friendship are summed up in peace, that the panelled room at Stag Court is free of its ghostly visitant, and the blind eyes seek no more.



## THE SONG OF THE WANDERER.

**T**HE wind is calling.

The wind of the heath, with the hum of the bee in it,  
The wind of the hill, with the voice of the free in it,  
The wind of the pines, with the sound of the sea in it,  
Calling all wanderers to their wandering.

The dusk is falling.

The dusk of the heath with the plover's cry in it,  
The dusk of the wood, with the leaves that sigh in it,  
The dusk of the sea, with white wings that fly in it,  
Calling all wanderers to their wandering.

Whither? Whither?

Down the road, where the clear stars gleam on it,  
Through the fern, with the glow-worms' beam on it,  
Over the stream, where the moon-shadows dream on it,  
Pass we, road-wanderers on our wandering.

Thither! Thither!

Over the moor, when the lightning plays on it,  
Over the sea, with the sunrise blaze on it,  
Into the mist, with the last sunrays on it,  
Pass we, road-wanderers, on our wandering.

UNA ARTEVELDE TAYLOR.



A POINT OF INTEREST.

THE WAITRESS: I hear they've captured the biggest hotel robber in London.  
THE CUSTOMER: They have! Which hotel does he run?

## THE EDITOR'S SCRAP-BOOK.

### NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

(With Reservations).

PATER: Resolved—To set my boy a good example by catching the 8.45 to town every morning (unless, of course, I've got a golf match on with Colonel Putter).

MATER: Resolved—Not to brag about my titled uncle by marriage (except on my "At Home" days).

SON AND HEIR: Resolved—Never to back another horse as long as I live (but to have a little bit on the Waterloo Cup).

SCHOOLBOY JIM: Resolved—Not to pull my small sister's pigtail (unless she calls me "mother's little man.")

SMALL SISTER: Resolved—Not to scratch or pinch Jimmy (unless he says "Cry! cry! pipe your eye!")

NURSE: Resolved—Not to trim my hat when I ought to be looking after baby (unless he's as good as gold on the hearthrug).

BABY: Resolved—Not to swallow any more bits of coal (unless nurse is busy trimming her hat by the window).

CAT: Resolved—Not to eat what's left of the salmon (unless I'm quite sure the servants would, if I didn't).

Jessie Pope.

### "THOSE DEAR CHILDREN."

It has been said that "children and fools speak truth," and though it is to be hoped that truthfulness is not confined to these two classes of the community, children certainly have a knack of blurring out awkward truths at inopportune moments. To realise this, one only has to recall that incident of the accepted suitor asking his prospective brother-in-law, aged seven: "Willie, do you know that at the party last night your sister promised to marry me?" and receiving the staggering answer: "Oh, yes! that's what the party was for!"

It was a little awkward, too, when the lady visitor, who had prolonged a morning call, hoping to be invited to lunch, at last, on rising to go, asked the little daughter of the house if she would go with her to the station, and met the innocent reply: "I'm afraid I can't, because we are going to have lunch as soon as you've gone!"

Then, again, it was more than awkward—it was unkind—when a schoolmaster, wishing to illustrate the meaning of the word "slowly," walked very slowly across the room, and on asking: "How did I walk?" received the prompt reply: "Please, sir, bow-legged, sir."

Children have a delightful way of concentrating their attention on their own point of view, and completely ignoring the other side of the question, and their arguments and excuses founded on this idiosyncrasy are sometimes delicious. For instance, two boys were discussing some evidently abstruse subject, when baby, aged four, very pronouncedly expressed *his* opinion. "Oh, baby, you don't know anything about it."

"I know as much as you, if I am little."

"Well, then, how much is twice one?"

"Oh, that's different!"

And what could be more charming than this little man's defence when his mother found him eating something in the middle of the morning, and asked: "Walter, what have you got in your mouth?"

"A blackness, mother" (it was liquorice). "Where did you get it?"

"Under daddy's pillow." "Why didn't you ask me before you ate it?"

"If I had asked you, and you had said 'No'—clearly that desolating possibility was not to be risked."

Surely no one will deny the wit in a

child's description of Henry VIII. as "a professional widower," or in the definition of a zebra as "a donkey with a football jersey on," or the confusion of mind shown in the moral deduced by a little girl from the Parable of the Ten Virgins, as "we should always be on the look out for a bridegroom!"

We have been told on excellent authority that "half the lies that are told about Ireland are not

true," but there would seem to be at least a modicum of truth in the child's statement that "the conquest of Ireland was begun in the year 1170, and is still going on." The definition of faith as "that quality which enables us to believe what we know to be untrue," is not very far removed from the old theological "*credo quia impossibile*," while the statement that "the marriage customs of the ancient Greeks were

that a man married only one wife, and this was called monotonous," might have been prompted by the newspaper discussion, "Is marriage a failure?" Of course, everybody knows that children are very observant, that little eyes are very sharp, so one should not be surprised when little six-year-old Jack, writing to his aunt in England his impressions of India, tells her: "Here we have a larger moon, and we keep it better polished."

And that boy of eight must have been an acute observer, and even a student of customs in shopping, who, on being shown his twin baby sisters, re-

marked in all good faith: "Oh, mother's been getting bargains again!"

The following conversation must also be the result of the exercise of that same faculty. Elsie and Edith were at a loss for a game. "Let's play at being 'at home,'" said Elsie. "We'll have 'a day.'" "But what does that mean?" begged Edith; "what *is* 'a day'?" "Oh, don't be stupid," said Elsie. "All *fashionable*



SAME THING!

"Yes, I remembered her at once as the girl I was engaged to on my holidays some seasons ago."

"What a wonderful memory for faces you have, haven't you?"

"No—for rings!"



*Howard Savage*

#### THE THIRST FOR KNOWLEDGE.

"MUMMY, dear, does it snow because it's winter, or is it winter because it snows?"

people have 'days.' "God's day is Sunday, and mother's is Tuesday."

And, for another example, little Joan, aged nine, curious about an expected guest, asks her mother: "What is she like? Is she old or young? What does she look like? What does she think about?" Her mother attempts a description. "I know," says Joan, summing her up, quite satisfied, "black net and sequins."

Sometimes quaint reasons are given in support of children's requests, as when little Lucy asked: "Mamma, may I have baby to wheel about in

my pram?" and on being asked why she wanted the baby, replied: "Oh, my dolly gets broken so, every time the pram upsets."

Another suggestive reason was given by the little boy who was found crying by a kind-hearted old lady. She asked: "What are you crying for, little man?" "Father is h-hanging up the p-pictures." "Well, why do you cry?" "He h-hit his thumb." "Ah! I see, you cry from sympathy with his pain." "N-no—I l-laughed!"

*W. Tarrant.*



## WHEN THE PANTOMIME'S OVER.

What do they do in summer-time?  
When there is no more pantomime,  
And, according to the papers, there is not a soul in  
Town?

Does Harlequin wear scales, or not?  
And does he make the poker hot  
With which to burn the calves of either Pantaloon  
or Clown?

Does Columbine still wear the skirts  
In which she pirouettes and flirts  
Upon the stage? or don, instead, an ordinary gown?  
And does she, even in repose,  
Prefer to stand upon her toes?  
Is she married to the Harlequin? the Pantaloon? or  
Clown?

Does Joey still contrive to steal  
The requisites for every meal?  
Or make, with best fresh butter, slides to throw  
the people down?  
And does he wear his scarlet grin  
All through the year, week out, week in,  
And never, for a single day, forget to play the  
Clown?



DOUBLE-DYED!

TOURIST: What sort of a landlord have you got here?

NATIVE: He's the sort iv man, sorr, if he wuz put on an uninhabited island, he'd stick his hands in the pockets of the naked savages and rob them of what they hadn't got!

Is life, for them, a pantomime  
In which they four must, all the time,  
Play Harlequin and Columbine, and Pantaloon and  
Clown?

Or are we just ourselves to blame  
For thinking they must be the same  
At home, as when we see them in the pit for half-  
a-crown?

*Ada Leonora Harris.*



SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE: Well, Jerry, what did you spend during the election?

JERRY: I'll leave that to yer own judgment, yer honour.




JONES: Lend you my motor? What's the matter with your own?

ROBINSON: Oh, I don't understand running a car well enough yet to use my own.



AGGRAVATING CIRCUMSTANCES.

"THERE yer go, stoopid! Alwiz droppin' yer slice -butter-side down, an' all!"



*To the perfectly healthy  
Laughter comes often."*

**TAKE BEECHAM'S PILLS**

**AND EAT WELL. WORK WELL. SLEEP WELL.**



TEA-  
TIME

is specially  
welcome if

**BORWICK'S  
BAKING POWDER**

has been used in making the Cakes,  
Tarts, and Pastry.

Everything so light, digestible and appetizing!

**"Bermaline"**  
THE PEERLESS  
**Brown  
Bread**

FROM ALL  
HIGH-CLASS BAKERS AND CONFECTIONERS

AMARYLLIS.

Tell me of capilline fashion,  
Will you, Amaryllis fair?  
What the next dye is to dash on  
Your most glorious shade of hair.  
First 'twas auburn, then 'twas yellow,  
After that a sombre black,  
Then I saw a *barb'rous* fellow  
Had to auburn changed it back

SQUIRE: Well, Sam, my man, I hear you've got some work at last.

SAM: Yes, thank you, sir; plenty of work, plenty of work.

SQUIRE: You're looking very fat on it.

SAM: Yes, sir, plenty of work; suits me well.

SQUIRE: But how is it you're standing about here? Why don't you go and do it?

SAM: Oh, I don't do it, sir. Plenty of work for the old woman. Plenty of work for her.



UNIVERSAL PROVISION.

TOURIST: They tell me that's wonderful stout. Food and drink in one, eh?

JARVEY: 'Deed it is, sorr; and a night's lodgin' an' all, if ye take enough of it.

Tell me truly what the next is  
Of capilline fashion's whirls,  
For your lover really vexed is  
With the latest shade of curls.

All I ask you, Amaryllis—  
I don't want to give you pain—  
Follow not all fashion's sillies,  
Let it ne'er be changed again.

P. C. Coote.

"YES, sir! I tell you this entire country is in the absolute grasp of thirty men."

"You don't say so! I had no idea the number was so large."



SHE: You make love like an amateur.

HE: That's where the art comes in.

# WHAT ANTIPON MEANS.

## Health, Slenderness & Strength.

WHEN any stout person has lost beauty of form and become conspicuously stout, and when, as is too often the case, he (or she) has deteriorated in health and strength as a consequence of the large excess of fatty matter that has accumulated in all parts of the body, Antipon means sure salvation from the disease of obesity and the hundred and one complaints that arise therefrom.

Antipon means even more than this. When the corpulent sufferer has been still further weakened and made quite ill by starving and drugging, excessive cathartics, gymnastics, &c.; when the whole organism seems to be a flabby, devitalised mass; when physical and mental energy are at a low ebb, Antipon means complete and lasting restoration to health, strength and vitality, renewed slender beauty, recovery of all the pure contours that make up perfect symmetry, purification of the skin and complexion. The reduction to normal weight goes without saying.

All the above delightful results can be absolutely relied upon when the pleasant course of Antipon treatment (short or long, as the case may require) is conscientiously followed. Antipon requires no help but that of good appetite and plenty of good nourishment to satisfy it. The tonic effect of this wonderful fat-reducing specific is of the greatest benefit to the whole system; the digestive organs are much strengthened, and the appetite is sharpened. Not excess fat, but renewed muscular development is the result of the food enjoyed, both during and after the Antipon treatment, the reason of this being that during the rapid elimination of

the superfluous fatty matter *Antipon also gradually overcomes the tendency to put on fat to an abnormal degree.* The fortunate person under treatment, therefore, gets *thin, but muscular and well-fed instead of remaining stout, flabby, and ill-nourished.* It is in reality a marvellous transformation such as none of the old-time methods was ever capable of accomplishing. Temporary weight-reducing during "wasting" and other abuses was all they could do; and, when persisted in, such methods are equal to ruining the soundest constitution. Antipon stands alone—supreme as weight-reducer and strengthener combined.

The tonic properties of Antipon have made it a great favourite with nurses. The following is an extract of a letter from a Sheffield trained nurse:—"I have," she writes, "used Antipon in the case of the very fattest woman I have ever nursed. The result has been marvellous. She is getting smaller and beautifully less every day, and the best of it is she is in perfect health now, where before

she had all sorts of troubles."

The Antipon treatment is pleasing and inspiring from the very first, as within a day and a night of the first dose there is a decrease varying between 8 oz. and 3 lb., and each subsequent day's treatment is proof positive of the weight-reducing and beautifying effects of Antipon.

Antipon is sold in bottles, price 2s. 6d. and 4s. 6d., by Chemists, Stores, &c.; or, should there be any difficulty, may be had (on sending remittance), privately packed, carriage paid, direct from the Antipon Company, Olmar Street, London, S.E.



WHISPERED COMMENTS.

He: "She has certainly got tremendously stout since last I heard her sing."

She: "Yes, indeed. She should take Antipon for a few weeks. It's a marvellous treatment."



#### HOW THE NEIGHBOURS TOOK IT!

"HALLO, Brown! What's up?"  
 "Gunshot wounds, old man."  
 "Great Scot! How did it happen? Out shooting?"  
 "No, learning the cornet."

#### THE POET'S LETTER.

The poet wrote: "I lay them at your feet—  
 My verses—with the utmost trepidation,  
 And trust, if Fortune favours me, they'll meet  
 Your kind consideration."

But what the poet to his editor

Ought to have said, I think, on rumination,  
 Was: "All this rubbish I will part with for . . .  
 Well—a consideration!"

*R. Mertun.*



BROWN: You certainly have a good cook. By the way, where do you get your servants?

SMITH: From our neighbours, When we hear

of a good one among them, we offer her more money to come to us.

BROWN: But, my dear fellow, is that honourable?

SMITH: Why not? Can you develop a sense of honour with a poor digestion?



PROFESSOR: Heavens! This was the day I was to have been married. What will she think of me?

ASSISTANT: You were married. Don't you remember? The ceremony took place at noon.

PROFESSOR: Ah, yes, to be sure. I recall now my annoyance at losing an hour.



"I CARE FOR NOBODY, NO! NOT I." BY MRS. SEYMOUR LUCAS.

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"TILL THE FINAL HARVEST-HOUR." BY MRS. SEYMOUR LUCAS.

*Reproduced by permission of the Berlin Photographic Company, New Bond Street, W.*

## THE ART OF MRS. SEYMOUR LUCAS.

BY AUSTIN CHESTER.

HOW far example, how far heredity, how far environment, influence us are moot points. We know that we are more or less the creatures of the air we breathe and of the objects by which we are surrounded, but how far we are subjects of inheritance in our tastes, rather than free-will seekers after special impressions, is a matter yet to be solved. It is, however, extremely likely that the assurance we gain from the knowledge that members of our own families in bygone times have shown genius in some one or another branch of science or art works upon us to suggest that since they accomplished so much, it is very possible that we, too, may be under control of the same afflatus. The particular science or art in which they excelled, in fact, appears by this means to have become domesticated

and, like our name, part of our inheritance; and it is undoubtedly of capital importance that some such assurance should convince us that similar success, if we seek it in the same paths, is not out of our range. Genealogically behind Mrs. Seymour Lucas there is an artistic background, and the whole of her upbringing and surroundings have favoured the development of the painter in her.

She is of Dutch descent, the daughter of Louis Diendoné de Cornelissen, whose forbear, Antonius Cornelissen, was a great patron of the fine arts and intimate friend of Van Dyck, who painted his portrait, whilst she is the inheritor of the blood of Rubens, through the marriage of that great artist's daughter into the Cornelissen family. Her tastes and her standard were formed, therefore, if we are believers in heredity, as it is

Y



"CINDERELLA'S DREAM." BY MRS. SEYMOUR LUCAS.

*Reproduced by permission of the Berlin Photographic Company, New Bond Street, W.*

difficult not to be, in the Holland of the seventeenth century, where, within a few decades, there arose a new renaissance in art.

With such attachment as we have shown her to have to the art of the Netherlands, it was natural for Marie Elizabeth Cornelissen to turn to painting as a profession, even although the particular branch of the family to which she belongs had, in quitting Monikendam for France, removed her thence during her impressionable years.

There is little to say of Mrs. Seymour Lucas by way of biography. A general education was conducted at home, and an art one acquired under Mr. John Parker, the able water-colour painter, in France, and in the Royal Academy Schools.

Mr. Parker put her through a course of discipline in line and colour by which, severe as it was, she was to derive great benefit upon joining first the ranks of Academy students, and more especially



"FOR EVER AND EVER, AMEN!" BY MRS. SEYMOUR LUCAS.

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"ON THE THRESHOLD OF LIFE." BY MRS. SEYMOUR LUCAS.

*Reproduced by permission of Mr. H. G. Radford.*

later, when she started independence in her art. As the eagerness of the mere student abated, Mrs. Seymour Lucas discovered, and early, a peculiar sensitiveness to beauty and an aptitude for translating this quality into terms of paint. She chose, however, a line entirely her own, and in becoming a painter of children may well say: "I stand on my attainment." Her understanding of her subject is announced in the vigour of her expression, and here we see her the

possessor of an unusual gift, for comprehension of the child-mind is a far more rare attainment than parents, schoolmasters, and those *savants* responsible for the educational code seem to be aware. It is comprehension alone that can train to the light that which is best in child human nature, and such training is only possible when those in authority understand the wayward delicacy of the shoots with which they have to deal.

To "flash light into the house within, its



"OUR GRANDMOTHERS." BY MRS. SEYMOUR LUCAS.

*Reproduced by permission of Mr. Arthur Lucas, owner of the original and of the copyright.*



many chambers, its memories and associations upon its inscribed and pictured walls," is the function Mrs. Seymour Lucas has laid upon her talent.

It was perhaps the happy effect of an early marriage and the possession of small tenants of a nursery that directed Mrs. Seymour Lucas's attention to children as models, and gave to her opportunity of reading their translucent minds. One of her happiest efforts, a clay bust of one of her own children, exhibited at the Royal Academy at the beginning of the 'eighties, gained well-deserved praise for its expressional suggestion of movement.

It is the indoor child, born in a world protected, the complex child the product of civilisation, upon whom the nursery, the privileged centre of indulgence, encourages an exotic, sophisticated grace, a certain distinction of bearing, with whom the art of Mrs. Seymour Lucas chiefly deals. But in her picture "Small and of No Reputation,"



MAY DOMVILLE. BY MRS. SEYMOUR LUCAS.

*Reproduced by permission of Mrs. Domville.*



"ONLY ME!" BY MRS. SEYMOUR LUCAS.

*Reproduced, by permission of Lord Newlands, from photograph by E. H. Mills.*

one of her latest works, we have the natural child without superficial grace, secure in the present and happy in rags, because to-morrow has no place in his calculation. This picture, known under the above-mentioned title in the etching published by Messrs. Mendoza, is given as our frontispiece under the title by which Messrs. Thomas Forman & Sons call their coloured plates: "I care for nobody, No! not I."

The picture entitled "Our Grandmothers" has also been reproduced in colours, as a hand-printed coloured engraving; but only two hundred copies were issued, and the plate was then destroyed, so that the impressions are likely to increase in value. An excellent engraving of this subject has also been produced in Vienna.

In the portrait of Carol, the small son of the Hon. Mr. Justice Swinfen Eady, we have a baby, between two and three years old, upon whose eyes there still seems to live some vision of "trailing clouds of glory," whose scrupulous ears are still open to the message of the winds, and on whose countenance is written that it has not yet lost its "genius for divine things." If



"WE ARE BUT LITTLE CHILDREN WEAK." BY MRS. SEYMOUR LUCAS.

*From the picture in the collection of Mrs. Paddon, reproduced by permission of the Berlin Photographic Company, New Bond Street, W.*



"THE DISTAFF." BY MRS. SEYMOUR LUCAS.

*Reproduced by permission of Mrs. Richardson.*

Wordsworth's "Ode on the Recollections of Immortality in Childhood" had its anticipator in Henry Vaughan's "The Retreat," it is still the first poem that has distinctly shown us that the beginning of life, like the end, is not action, but contemplation; that it is the child for whom the invisible world really exists, and who culls wonders, sounds, and sights from the land of speculative imagination it inhabits.

In "For Ever and Ever, Amen!" there is

a certain "liturgical formality" in the grouping of the children, the looks all one way of the closely ranged faces, with eyes opened as if upon some glorious vision. "Evensong" holds something of the same white propriety of childish face. "The First Chapter" and "Our Grandmothers" are far more sophisticated, and the children, passive recipients of externals, have, in both pictures, been lifted above a simple work-a-day world into a period more meretricious.



"THE FIRST CHAPTER." BY MRS. SEYMOUR LUCAS.

*Reproduced by permission of Mrs. Richardson.*

"The Hearth-witch" must be grouped with the "Cinderella," and both are connected in our mind with the very admirable series of children's books, the illustrations of which first substantiated Mrs. Seymour Lucas's claim to be reckoned with as an artist of very considerable power. When some years ago these books first appeared, "Granny's Story Book," "The

Enchanted Chair," and "Told by the Fire-light," the formula of nursery-book illustration, with the exception of the work by Kate Greenaway, Walter Crane, and Henry Holiday, was mainly poor. It was touched with unreality and affectation; it lacked sympathy with the mood of the story-writer, and it was a conventional craft rather than an art.





CAROL, SON OF MR. JUSTICE SWINFEN EADY. BY MRS. SEYMOUR LUCAS.

*Reproduced by permission of the Hon. Mr. Justice Swinfen Eady.*

In these pictures—"fit and fair and simple and sufficient"—of very young children we are shown always the April wonder of the baby eyes; but in painting children who have reached almost to the shore of adolescence, Mrs. Seymour Lucas presents her subjects as malleable to the impress of their increased worldly knowledge, and in "The Hunt is Up" we have a charming young "Diana Vernon" of fifteen or sixteen; and "On the Threshold of Life" a picture of a girl whose age halts between these two stages.

Mrs. Seymour Lucas has been active in

portraiture, and in this branch of art, again, owing to the simplicity of her ambitions, particularly successful in the portraits of children. She has painted, amongst many other likenesses, those of Miss Birdie Lewin, little Miss Donville and her brother, Miss Gamman, the three daughters of Mr. Herbert Ward, the same number of children of the Hon. Mr. Justice Swinfen Eady, and a picture portrait of Master Ivor Campbell, the son of Lord George Campbell, in the picturesque dress of a page, at the Coronation of King Edward VII., when the small figure of the



ISABEL, DAUGHTER OF MR. HENRY GAMMAN. BY MRS. SEYMOUR LUCAS.

*Reproduced by permission of Mr. Henry Gamman.*

boy was one of that gorgeous procession in which the majesty of crowns and robes, the glitter of jewels, the sheen of satins and brocades, made of our ordinarily sad-clothed people so brave a show.

"How insignificant," wrote Pater, in that exquisite essay, "The Child in the House," "at the moment seem the influences of the sensible things which are tossed and fall and lie about us, so, or so, in the environment of early childhood. How indelibly, as we afterwards discover, they affect us. . . . The realities

and passions, the rumours of the greater world without, steal in upon us, each by its own special little passage-way, through the wall of custom about us; and never afterwards quite detach themselves from this or that accident, or trick, in the mode of their first entrance to us." This impress *on* the child of its environment; this stealing in from without on its citadel of peace of rumours of the outside world, we all can recall; but that memory which few of us retain in after-life is the impress *on* its environment, which



is conferred by the child. This memory it is with which Mrs. Seymour Lucas has been endowed. It is one not to be hired ; it is a something uncollected from our own youth, a something left unblotted in the register of our early days. She knows how the child's sense of beauty confers beauty upon his treasures, and how the materialised objects around, which assume such large proportions on his low horizon, are woven through and through with the gold wonder-threads of magic.

She realises, and to the full, that the child is no

Angel-watered lily, that near God  
Grows and is quiet,

any more than he is man of dwarfed faculties ; but she sees him as he is, a separate entity, filled with fugitive charm, whose heart is a citadel of peace in the midst of trouble.

No painter of any real capacity is content to exercise his talent only in one groove, and Mrs. Seymour Lucas has on occasion departed



THE MISSES BATH, TWO MEMBERS OF MRS. SEYMOUR LUCAS'S FAMILY, AS PAINTED BY RAEBURN.

*Photographed from the original by K. L. Price.*



MRS. SEYMOUR LUCAS.

*Photograph by Ernest Mills.*

from those lines in which public appreciation is inclined to entice her to remain. This departure is noticeable in the case of the pictures "Types of English Beauty," "Weighed and Found Wanting," and in the strong imaginative work, "Love Took Up the Glass of Time," a canvas that suggests a versatility very unusual, while at the same time it reminds us how great was the influence and example of G. F. Watts. Meissonier declared that a woman who married an artist ought to understand that she is dedicating her life to sacrifice ; and in direct contradiction to this dictum, George Eliot asserted that man and wife should have the same tastes. But the writer of our article on the work of Mr. Seymour Lucas, R.A., which appeared in our issue of May, 1905, rightly said that when this able painter married Elizabeth de Cornelissen, he married "an artist of particular charm," and that between the two is that agreement of aims which makes for ideal companionship. After commenting on the links by which Mrs. Seymour Lucas is bound to the early painters of Holland, which we trace at the beginning of this article, he added : "Somehow or other there is a special appropriateness in the gathering together of these high memories and associations in the studio of Mr. (and Mrs.) Seymour Lucas at West Hampstead."

# THE FIRST WIFE'S PICTURE.

By BEATRICE HARRADEN,

*Author of "Ships that Pass in the Night," "Katharine Frensham," etc.*



It was about two o'clock in the middle of a June night. Gweneth Sirrell lay awake in her bed, whilst her husband was sleeping quietly and dreamlessly in his bed against the opposite wall of the room. For weeks

she had been increasingly obsessed with one idea, which had now taken such a strong hold on her, that she knew the moment had come when she must decide between the claims of her brain and the dictates of her conscience.

Her conscience said: "You are contemplating a mean, irreverent, and ungenerous act."

Her brain said: "You cannot stand this strain any longer; it is telling on you both mentally and physically."

Her conscience said: "You would never forgive yourself for your paltriness; it would for ever haunt you."

Her brain said: "It isn't as if you have not tried to wrestle with this trouble; you have wrestled. But you have failed. There remains only one thing to be done. Go and do it now—and the network will loosen."

*The network will loosen.* The word echoed in her ears loudly, softly, with a soothing cadence. Her decision was made.

She crept from her bed, slipped on her dressing-gown, and stood listening to her husband's quiet and regular breathing. Then she opened the door carefully and passed out into the landing, where she lingered, straining her ears to be sure that no one save herself was stirring in the house.

She was a good-looking woman, with an abundance of soft, fair hair, which fell caressingly around her shoulders. Her bearing was gallant. One could have imagined that even at that moment, chained as she obviously was by some compelling secret circumstance, she could, nevertheless, have freed herself instantly, if some great and unexpected

demand had been made on her courage and initiative.

But meantime there was an elusive expression of subtle mystery on her face, and the pupils of her eyes had contracted to a pin's point. Her arms and hands were slightly extended in a position of strained rigidity. She noticed this herself, and let them drop to her side; and as though this simple movement had eased some part of a painful tension, she sighed and went with noiseless tread down the stairs into the hall.

She found her way, without a light, into the drawing-room. Here she switched on the electric lamps and glanced around at the pictures: the portrait of an old man by Raeburn, a silvery seascape, a Dutch interior, two or three interesting impressionist country scenes, and a specially fine Sargent, the portrait of a young relative of her husband's, who had thrown up the Law and entered the Order of the Jesuits.

At last she went to her little bureau at the right-hand side of the fireplace, lit a candle, and took out from the drawer a pair of scissors and a strong penknife. She opened this, and tested the larger blade against the back of an oaken photograph frame. She nodded her head, evidently satisfied with the result of her experiment. Then, armed with the candlestick, which she carried rather high, and with these two intimate everyday life weapons which she had thrust into her pocket, Gweneth Sirrell stole into the hall once more, paused to reassure herself that no one had been roused overhead, turned the handle of her husband's library door, and entered the room.

She locked the door. She raised the candle and let the light fall on the amazingly lifelike portrait of a beautiful young woman which alone occupied the wall facing the great writing-desk. There was no doubt that this extraordinary picture dominated the room. It would necessarily have dominated anyone who sat in that room. It would have been impossible even for a stranger, glancing at it casually, not to have been

haunted by a vague though vivid remembrance of it. And what, then, about the man who spent all his spare time in its presence? Was it to be supposed that he could resist gazing at it day after day, week after week, month after month? If for nothing else, its magnificent imperiousness demanded, exacted, a relentless homage. Sargent had consciously or unconsciously read that relentlessness in the woman's character, and had recorded it in her lineaments and in her bearing. The woman was what is called dead. Yet one had only to look at the picture to know that her spirit was not dead, but was hovering around, animating a true emblem and symbol of her former self. Gweneth addressed the picture in quiet, incisive tones.

"You dominate the room, the house, his heart," she said. "I can no longer stand your tyranny. I have tried to be patient and great-minded. When he and I together visited your grave and I witnessed his grief, I knew that I, his second wife, should have to battle with your memory—for his sake, for my sake. I vowed it should be a generous contest—not a contest at all, but a fair and reverent understanding. You have made this impossible. But one hope remains. This living presentment of you must vanish from his life."

She placed the candle on the writing-desk, and laughed a curious, little, short laugh, the mirthlessness of which attuned with her grave manner.

"It was one thing to plant snowdrops on her grave," she said, as she opened the pen-knife, "and quite another thing to let them rise up and choke me."

She turned on two of the electric lights nearest the picture, placed a chair before it, mounted up, and began her appointed work. She inserted her knife carefully at the extreme right edge of the lower end of the frame, and by degrees cut out the whole canvas. The intensity of her breathing betrayed the violence of the emotions which were governing her. The portrait fell to the ground. She picked it up leisurely, and, as she rolled it into a long roll, she said again—

"It was one thing to plant snowdrops on her grave."

She looked at the roll intently for a moment, and then a sudden thought struck her.

"Yes," she said, smiling craftily. "The other Sargent, too."

Without any delay, but without any hurry,

she returned to the drawing-room, and in the most business-like fashion cut from its frame the portrait of her husband's young Jesuit relative. She rolled it and bore it proudly to the library, where she fitted it into the larger roll of the first wife's picture. Once or twice she took alarm and fancied that she heard a disturbance in the house; but when she realised that it was only the wind, which had been gathering strength to spend itself in sudden tempestuous gusts, she sank contentedly into the arm-chair. She glanced in triumph at the long roll. She scrutinised with alternations of anxiety and relief the empty space which had so recently been filled by that imperious personality.

"A blank now," she muttered, laughing softly. "You've gone. Gone. And yet I still seem to see you here. Ah, but that's only my fancy. You've gone. Gone. And yet——"

She snatched up the candle and stood before the empty space.

"Of course. Gone," she said excitedly. "I thought I could not be mistaken."

Once more she sank into the chair, but once more she sprang up, with fresh doubts in her agitated brain.

"Still there—still there, surely?" she said.

Again she lifted the candle and held it with trembling hand before the empty frame.

"No. Gone. Of course, gone," she whispered, with a final sigh of reassurance; and for the time being her mind did not travel beyond the fact that she had accomplished her task.

She sat there, hugging her knees and smiling, wrapped in her own strange thoughts, unconscious of the coldness of the night, the desolation of the hour, the danger of detection. Her face wore a curious expression of triumphant pride, intermingled with an impersonal aloofness which seemed to disclaim for her any share in her recent activities. Twice she spoke aloud words which gave a leading idea of the memories encompassing her.

"The honeymoon journey," she said. "All the identical places she visited with him, taken in exactly the same rotation. Exactly the same rotation. And ending up with her grave, where I planted the snowdrops."

Then there was a period of silence, during which she clasped her knees still tighter.

"And that flower-bed in his country garden," she continued. "It spelt her name. It——"



"Paused to reassure herself that no one had been roused overhead."

She broke off and shook her head impatiently. It was obvious that the memory of the flower-bed aggravated her even more than that of the honeymoon journey.

At last there floated across her mind the sudden realisation that her task was incomplete, and that she must now remove these two portraits to some sure hiding-place. Her brain leapt over all difficulties and impossibilities and arrived at the easiest and safest solution of this problem. But this part of her programme was evidently of little importance to her in comparison with the beginning: for she took no further precautions of stealthy silence, but went upstairs with an entire recklessness, carrying the trophies unconcealed under her arm. She made straight for the spare room, which was actually next to her own room, and, turning on the light, glanced in the direction of a door on the right-hand side of the fireplace. She opened the door, which led into a spacious cupboard. A large golf-bag rested against the extreme corner.

"Ah, I thought I remembered seeing it there," she said.

She carried it out of the cupboard, unfastened it, and took from it in leisurely indolence two or three of the clubs. She even examined them, identifying now the cleek, now the mashie, now the putter. Then she slipped her Sargent roll in amongst the remaining ones, and nodded her head gravely when she saw that her calculations had been correct, and that there was more than enough depth for the portraits, and plenty of space left over for the clubs which she had dislodged. She replaced them, restored the bag to its accustomed corner, and was on the point of seeking her bedroom again, when she remembered that she had left the candle burning on the desk in the library, and her knife and scissors lying on the floor.

Directly she crossed the threshold of the library she fixed her eyes on the empty portrait-frame.

"Surely, surely, it is still there," she said in a low, agonised voice.

Her hands sought her head; she pressed them tightly over her brow. She closed her eyes, as though she were unable to endure the vision before her. But at last, with a supreme effort, she gathered her courage together, snatched up the candle, and looked. Gradually a joyful change came over the distress of her countenance.

"Of course," she whispered, smiling. "It is gone. No doubt about that."

In a few minutes all incriminating signs of the night's work had been effaced, and Gweneth was safely in bed. She listened for a moment to her husband's continuously regular breathing, nodded her head, gave a sigh of relief, yawned from sudden infinite fatigue, turned on her side, and fell peacefully asleep.

## II.

WHEN the discovery was made the next morning, the whole house was in a state of consternation. Andrew Sirrell stood as one turned to stone before the empty frame which only the previous day had contained the portrait of his idolised first wife. Suddenly a light broke in through the wall of his stupefaction.

"Two Sargents," he said excitedly. "That speaks for itself. C—— has always believed that the same gang would start sooner or later on the New Masters. And he said they would begin with Sargent. Well, he was right."

His mind never for one moment included Gweneth in his suspicions. He was a selfish man, entirely without imagination, and these defects in his nature had caused him to be unconscious of the demands which he had made on her chivalrous forbearance; and since he had no knowledge whatsoever of her suffering, it was natural enough that not even the barest idea of her guilt entered into the region of his surmises. Indeed, now, as ever, he claimed from her an inordinate amount of sympathy. He led her himself into the library, and pointing tragically to the empty frame, burst into an hysterical fit of sobbing.

"It's gone, Gwen—gone," he cried.

"Gone?" she echoed, in a questioning tone.

"No, no, surely it's there."

"I don't wonder you cannot believe your eyes," he cried. "But it's gone, Gwen—gone."

"Yes, yes, I see now," she said gravely. "It's gone."

"I shall have the whole world ransacked," he went on excitedly. "I can't live without it. It has been everything to me—everything to me. It is a wonderful portrait. Sometimes I have almost cheated myself into believing that it was really she herself."

"Yes, I know," Gwen said, in a low voice. "And now you've lost it, Andrew."

"Oh, but it shall be found," he said desperately. "If I have to spend my last farthing on the search, it shall be found, Gwen."

He had quieted down a little by the time the detective arrived, but he was still in a distressing state of excitement; and it was to Gweneth that the official finally addressed himself for sensible information on the usual habits of the household. Gweneth gave all her answers with an impersonal calmness which would have produced a most favourable impression on any jury. One of her replies was a masterpiece of unconscious subtlety.

"I have no reason to suspect anyone of our household," she said. "I might just as well suspect myself."

The man smiled. Even Andrew Sirrell smiled at the absurd remoteness of such a suggestion. And when for form's sake the house was searched, it was Gweneth who led the way into the zone of danger, opened the cupboard door, and stood staring dauntlessly at the golf-bag, impelled against her own interests to contemplate the hiding-place of the lost treasure. If the detective had not been a detective, and the husband had not been obsessed by his one idea of tragic personal loss, Gweneth's peculiar expression of countenance and her persistent lingering in that spare room before that cupboard door would surely have made some impression on the minds of her companions. Nothing, however, reached them. No thought transference took place. The detective glanced at the golf-bag, and an almost human light stole over his impassive face. He thought immediately of his favourite golf links at Seaford and not of the first wife's picture. Andrew Sirrell, it is true, travelled a little nearer. He recalled to his saddened memory that bright May morning when he and his first wife had together bought that golf-bag. But the sight of it prompted no thought of the missing portrait. Yet Gweneth almost pointed to the objects of their united search. And once she nearly said aloud—

"Surely it is there—there and nowhere else. Surely I cannot be mistaken. I must look and know for certain. This uncertainty is not to be borne."

Suddenly her unbalanced mind readjusted itself to the requirements of the situation which she had created, and with a last effort of will, which cost her dear, physically and mentally, she was able to control her speech and check her impulse of movement.

So the search in the house proved, of course, ineffectual. The detective sped on his enlightened way, with his notebook full of important but vain details, which, so he

and Andrew Sirrell believed, would provide him with valuable clues connecting this theft with the interesting series of picture robberies proceeding steadily for some time, after judicious and fixed intervals. He had persuaded himself that one was due now. Well, one had come. Needless to say, nothing human or superhuman could have ousted this belief from its geographical position in the map of his mind. Andrew Sirrell, sharing this faith, strengthened the active attitude of the detective and the passive preventiveness of the real criminal. Yet once Gweneth almost relented. For when she and her husband were alone again in the library, he turned tragically to the empty wall and gave way to yet another paroxysm of passionate grief.

"Do you care so fearfully—do you care so fearfully, my poor Andrew?" she cried suddenly.

"She was all the world to me," he answered. "No one could ever have taken her place."

"Then why did you ask me?" Gweneth returned, with a simple dignity.

He glanced at her, and for the first time a faint glimmering of the unseemliness of his behaviour, and of the discourtesy of his uncontrolled regret stole upon the darkness of his selfishness. Some words rose to his lips, but he was unable to give utterance to them. Her quiet dignity paralysed him. It removed her out of the reach of perfunctory apology, inadequate justification. He could only stand staring fixedly at the empty frame, and it was she who broke the terrible silence.

"You can see for yourself," she said, with a strange smile on her face, "that the picture has been very carefully cut out from its setting. There isn't a shred anywhere."

"No, not a shred," he said, thankful to regain the power of speech. "The knife must have been fearfully sharp."

"Yes, it was—evidently," she said.

"I don't even notice the indent where the man began to cut," he said, "unless it was here on the right."

"Yes, it was here—evidently," she said.

"I can't believe it is gone," he said, with a sudden return of frenzied grief. "I see it before me even now."

"I see it," Gweneth said slowly. "I see it always there."

That was her punishment. She saw it in its frame, in its accustomed place in the library, endowed as ever with an irresistible and unrelenting influence. It was in vain that her brain reminded her of the night's



happening; it was in vain that she wandered from the spare room to the library, and from the library to the spare room; in vain that, to reassure herself, she locked the spare room door, and took the two pictures out of the golf-bag, gazed at them with painful intenseness, and restored them deliberately to their seclusion.

Yet a few minutes afterwards she was more convinced than before that the portrait of her rival hung undisturbed on the wall in the library, and that her agony, her effort, her eagerness, her debasement had failed of their set purpose. To have sinned and succeeded would at least have been a mental satisfaction and triumph, physically if not morally healing. But in Gweneth's dangerously unbalanced condition of mind, to have sinned and been frustrated could only mean an access of mental disaster.

That night, after many hours of strain and restlessness, her brain gave way.

### III.

"SNOWDROPS — in the golf-bag — ransack the world — always there — in the grave."

These were the words, constantly repeated in poor Gweneth's ravings, which, amongst all the incoherence, arrested the attention of the doctor who watched by her side. He took out his notebook and pencil, and tried the words in separate combinations. These were his entries —

"1. Snowdrops in the golf-bag.

"2. Snowdrops in the grave.

"3. Ransack the world, snowdrops always there in the golf-bag.

"4. Ransack the world, snowdrops always there in the grave.

"5. The golf-bag always there in the grave, ransack the world for snowdrops.

"6. Snowdrops always there in the grave, ransack the world for golf-bag.

"7. Ransack the world for the grave, snowdrops always there in golf-bag."

He shook his head gravely as he read them over. They did not strike him as being ridiculous, for he knew that even in their disjointed connection they stood for certain fundamental ideas, the secret of which, once grasped, would reveal to him the workings of her disordered mind. She had collapsed. Why had she collapsed? He had, of course, been told of the picture robberies; but although he took into consideration the excitement which such an event would naturally have occasioned in the household, he regarded it merely as an accelerating agent, and not as a causative

force. It was obvious to his practised judgment that she had been on the verge of a precipice, and that she would eventually have fallen over sooner or later. Chance had contrived that it should be a little sooner. But what was the driving power which had impelled her in the direction of the precipice? He believed that if he could solve that problem, he could indirectly or directly help towards the healing of her mind. He never allowed himself to rely only on intuition or on accumulated experience, physical and mental. He searched the spiritual atmosphere of the sick person, and added his spiritual knowledge to his scientific equipment of analysis. Some of his *confrères* thought that he laid undue stress on the value of the spiritual; nevertheless, in their doubts they sought his help and the benefits of his methods, contenting themselves by attributing his successful results to the weight of his personality and not to the soundness of his views.

So he had been called in, in Gweneth's instance. And he continued to linger in the sick-room, puzzling over his notes, straining to catch some muttered fugitive word which would perhaps guide him to some clue of her spiritual condition. No fresh word came. But he was struck with her unceasing reference to snowdrops. Why snowdrops? This was the month of June, the month of roses, and no one ought to be harping on snowdrops until the hour of their sweet and welcome arrival in their own due time. He concluded that there must be some special reason why she was thinking of them? Did they represent to her a sweet memory, a sad experience, a happiness, a sorrow? He must try and find out. Before he left the house, he put several questions to Andrew Sirrell, and finally he referred to the snowdrops.

"She speaks constantly of snowdrops," he said. "I am curious to know whether they are her favourite flowers?"

"They were my first wife's favourite flowers," Andrew Sirrell replied, in a low voice.

"Your first wife's favourite flowers," the doctor repeated. Then, after a pause, he said casually —

"Did your present wife know this?"

"Oh, yes," Andrew Sirrell answered. "Of course, she knew it. She — we — planted snowdrops on — on the grave. We went together — in fact —"

He broke off and turned away, overcome with emotion.

A light broke in on the doctor.

"Ah," he said thoughtfully, "perhaps she has been fretting. Forgive me for asking you, but no doubt you were passionately attached to your first wife?"

"Yes," Andrew answered almost inaudibly.

"Did you perhaps claim from your second wife an unreasonable homage to the memory of her whom you had lost?" Dr. Newbold inquired.

"I was not conscious of doing this," Andrew Sirrell said.

"Of course not," Dr. Newbold said. "And that's where the whole trouble lies. No man would deliberately set out to hurt the feelings of his second wife, if he had any regard for her happiness. I myself never meant to do this. Yet I did it, Mr. Sirrell. And that is why I dare speak to you, because you will understand that I do not speak as a judge, but as a fellow-blunderer. My first wife's picture pervaded the house, and her memory pervaded my heart. My second wife bore the trial as long as she could, and then she quietly left me. She wrote: 'I leave you to your pictures and your memories.' I awoke instantly to the realisation of my selfishness in hurting her, and of my bereftness in forfeiting her love. It took a great deal of pleading and persuasion to make her leave her parents' home in Cumberland and return to me. But she yielded at last, and we entered on a new life, in which memories and actualities found a due and healthy relationship."

He paused. Andrew Sirrell, who had been standing staring out of the window, sank into the armchair, and for a brief minute covered his face with his hands.

"I begin to see it all," he said, in a tense voice. "Oh, what a fool I've been—what a selfish and cruel fool."

"One of a large company," Dr. Newbold answered kindly, "fellow-blunderers, fostered by an unjust tradition that women are here to bear anything from us. I rejoice that their new day has come."

•Andrew Sirrell did not heed his words. He was invaded by an army of reproachful and accusing thoughts.

"And the portrait," he cried aloud, in mental agony. "I must have made her suffer untold miseries over the portrait alone—and the robbery of it. I've been out of my senses. I've expected her to grieve over its loss as much as I grieve. I've——"

The doctor interrupted him suddenly.

"Of whom was the portrait?" he asked. "Not of your first wife?"

Andrew Sirrell gave silent assent.

"And it's one of the missing pictures?" he asked again.

Andrew Sirrell nodded.

"And I suppose she saw that your bereavement was renewed in its loss?" he asked.

"You torture me," Andrew Sirrell cried. "You torture me because the thoughts you suggest are only too true. I told her I could not live without the portrait. I told her that if I spent my last farthing in the search, it must be found. I remember I told her that the world must be ransacked."

Dr. Newbold glanced at the man's haggard face, and made no comment on this pitiful confession. But he ran his eye over his own notes, and with a secret sense of professional triumph, he mentally scratched out "*Snowdrops—ransack the world—in the grave.*" He believed that he had now probably solved the ideas for which they stood. The sick woman upstairs was suffering from a mental illness brought on or, at any rate, aggravated by jealousy and outraged pride. Yes, these were, perhaps, the forces causing her illness, the climax of which could very easily have been hastened by the robbery of the portrait and her husband's uncontrolled regret over the loss of his treasure. But there were still two phrases unexplained and disjointed from any apparent connection—"In the golf-bag—always there." What was "always there"? Did she mean that something was always "in the golf-bag"? Or did "always there" refer to the snowdrops in the grave? It was impossible to guess. And probably that detail might not matter. It might, of course, but it might not. But it did matter to know why her mind dwelt on the golf-bag. Was she fond of golf? Was her husband fond of golf? Had the first wife been fond of golf? Ah, perhaps there was a golf-bag in the house—"always there"—belonging to the first wife. He turned to ask the question, but he saw that Andrew Sirrell was encompassed with grief, and that the poor fellow needed the mercy of outer peace to help him to withstand the inner tempest which was gathering force in relentless fashion. So he forbore. He went away and left Andrew Sirrell alone, to meet himself face to face.

Andrew met himself, and as the encounter became more intimate, his suffering grew more acute. Numberless instances of his thoughtlessness and selfishness rose to his mind. The honeymoon, which they had spent in visiting all the places where he and his first bride had stayed during their

honeymoon. The sacred pilgrimage to her grave, where they had planted her favourite snowdrops, and he had been unable to control his passionate grief. The flower-bed, spelling with its pattern the letters of her beloved name. The portrait dominating his library and the shrine of his heart. Her books over which he was always poring; her letters which he was always reading. His constant demands on Gweneth's sympathy. His entire disregard of her feelings.

He shuddered. He was shocked. He was ashamed. He had accepted everything and given nothing. Why had she not made some sign? Why had she not tried to stop him in his pitiful course?

But stay. She had tried. He remembered now. He recalled two or three occasions when she had appeared to fall short in sympathy and kindness, and he had reproached her. He heard her voice saying gravely: "*I do my best in a very difficult position, Andrew.*" Why did not that warn him? And once she had refused to sit in his library. He heard her saying: "*There is no room for me in the library.*" Fool that he was, he had chosen to believe that she referred to the smallness of the room, and not to the mental space occupied by the portrait. Looking back now, he realised that he had received many warnings, all of which he in his folly, in his selfishness, in his insolence, had entirely disregarded. Insolence. Yes, that was the word. He had rewarded her kindness, her tenderness, not with gratitude, but with insolence. What was a man made of that he should dare take up such an attitude to the woman whom he had asked to share his life? What was a woman made of that she should deign to accept such treatment from a man's hands?

Ah, but Gweneth had not accepted it. She had been fighting it silently, and it was her silence which had cost her her sanity. Why had she not left him, as that other man's wife had left her husband? Why had she not cried out: "I leave you to your memories and your pictures"? Had she stayed on, hoping by her love and patience to wean him from the past and win him for herself? Was it true that, as the doctor said, his grief over the loss of the cherished portrait had proved to be the finishing touch to her despair? Alas, alas, he knew it to be true! He knew now that his unrestraint had been disgraceful. He remembered that for one brief moment a sense of shame had stolen over him, when Gweneth's quiet dignity had arrested the

onward rush of his unmeasured words. So that he must have known even then. And yet, in spite of that knowledge, he had continued to wound her. But not wilfully, not wilfully. What had the doctor said? Fellow-blunderers, belonging to a large company. But that did not help him. That did not make his individual blunder less fatal. That would not restore Gweneth to her sanity. That would not give him back his lost chances of loving and serving her. The words of the sad old German song echoed in his ears: "*The mill will never grind with the water that is past.*"

He said them aloud: "The mill will never grind with the water that——"

The door opened and the maid announced the detective.

"I have good news for you, sir," the man said, with a smile of professional triumph. "I have got on their track. It's as I thought—that same gang. We shall now find the portraits, without a doubt."

Andrew Sirrell gathered himself together and listened with apparent attention to the man's report.

But the only words he heard were the words of that old German song echoing ever mournfully in his ears: "*The mill will never grind with the water that is past.*"

#### IV.

THERE was no improvement in Gweneth's condition the next day. The night nurse reported a night of continuous brain excitement, which the opiate had not succeeded in allaying. Dr. Newbold asked to be left alone with the patient for a few minutes, and he drew his chair near the bed, and began to speak to Gweneth as though she were in her right mind, calm, conscious, and receptive of ideas.

"It has been one of those sad blunders, Mrs. Sirrell," he said gently, "which all but mar our lives and the lives of those we love. But your husband loves you. You must give him another chance. The snowdrops are dead. They will never bloom again."

He waited for a moment, and then he said again slowly and, if possible, with added tenderness—

"It has been one of those sad blunders which all but mar our lives and the lives of those we love. But your husband loves you. You must give him another chance. The snowdrops are dead. They will never bloom again."

There was a pause in her pitiful moaning. But it was of the briefest duration. He bent

nearer her. His voice, his manner, were as the voice and manner of one giving a benediction.

"Your husband loves you. The snow-drops are dead," he whispered again and again. There seemed no end to his patience and persistence.

There was another pause in her moaning. It appeared to him to last longer than the previous period of restfulness, and he felt some encouragement.

"Your husband loves you. The snow-drops are dead. Your husband loves you.

moment. That was some gain, if only temporary.

"But I believe her to be very ill, Mr. Sirrell," he said gravely. "It seems to me that to-day she has less strength than yesterday. The puzzle to me is that you should never have noticed that she was getting into a most peculiar mental condition."

Andrew bent his head.

"I am ashamed I did not notice," he said humbly.

The doctor remained silent.



"Your husband loves you. The snowdrops are dead."

You must give him another chance," he kept on murmuring softly but very clearly.

She lay quite still. She slept.

He rose and wiped the sweat from his brow. Had he reached her, or was it merely that the opiate had at last taken effect? He could not tell. He only knew that, armed with the secret of some part of her mental suffering, he had put forth the best of his brain strength in an attempt to reach her brain. He went downstairs to the library, and gave the good news to her husband that she was at least quiet for the

"I would do anything to make reparation to her," Andrew said, with painful earnestness.

"We will leave no stone unturned to save her, so that you may be able to make reparation," Dr. Newbold said. "But she's very ill, and I'm deeply puzzled."

He questioned Andrew about her character, her temperament, her tastes, her habits. And then he asked permission to speak to one of the maids. The parlour-maid, Flora, helped him in an altogether unexpected way. Yes, she said, she thought Mrs. Sirrell had

been very peculiar of late. She had gone about the house with a curious smile on her face, always rather preoccupied and sometimes talking to herself in a whisper. No, she had not been irritable to them. On the contrary, she had been kinder than ever, and there was no one in the house who would not have served her to the uttermost. Yes, she did vary a good deal, not only from day to day, but hour to hour. She was always different when Mr. Sirrell was at home. Directly she expected him, she left off brooding. Yes, that was the word. Brooding. Yes, on the whole, she had been worse than ever lately. Where did she spend most of her time? Oh, she spent most of her time in the library. What did she do? Nothing—except—

Flora hesitated and coloured.

"Well?" said the doctor kindly.

"Once or twice I've seen her standing staring at the portrait," Flora said nervously.

"Yes," said the doctor quite calmly, and as though the matter were of no importance.

"And once lately I heard her talking to it," Flora added still more nervously.

"Ah, that must have been your imagination," the doctor said, a little brusquely.

"No, sir, she was talking to it, and at first she didn't hear me come into the room," Flora insisted.

"And I suppose the other maids knew this, too?" the doctor said casually.

Flora shook her head.

"I haven't spoken of it till now," she answered, the tears coming into her eyes. "I was upset for her. She—she has always been good to me. But the next day I didn't let her go into the library. I gave it a good turn-out—and she had to keep away."

"Ah, then, she has had someone to watch over her very kindly," Dr. Newbold said gently; and he asked no more questions and signed to the girl that she might withdraw. But when she had reached the door, a sudden thought struck him, and, with the thought, came an impulse of need for further details of information which he believed she could probably supply. For some reason or other, which he explained to himself later, he checked the intensity of his eagerness and confined himself to one or two points only.

"I should like to ask you a few more things," he said, approaching nearer to her. "And I will tell you why I ask. It is important that, if possible, I should learn something about Mrs. Sirrell's behaviour immediately previous to her collapse. Mr. Sirrell tells me he was out in the afternoon.

He, therefore, could not know. Did she seem excited and overwrought? And, as far as you know, what did she do with herself? Did she, for instance, have a shock of any kind? You are attached to Mrs. Sirrell, are you not? Well, my reason for asking this is that I believe that we might have more chance of saving her if we knew exactly what it was that caused her final breakdown. I feel sure there was something.

"She wasn't excited at all," the girl said. "She was just restless—fearfully restless. She kept wandering up and downstairs, and went first into the library and then into the spare room. She didn't even settle down to her afternoon cup of tea. She left it half finished, and hurried up to the spare room."

"What did she do there?" the doctor asked slowly.

The girl shook her head.

"I don't know, sir," she answered.

"Was it her habit to go there often?" he asked.

"No," the girl replied.

"I should like to go there," he said, after a pause; and she led him upstairs to the spare room, and disappeared at once, thankful to escape from any further examination. He was alone; for Andrew Sirrell, who seemed as one stricken and paralysed by circumstance, had shown no sign of wishing to follow him, and had merely nodded assentingly when he had expressed a wish to see the room.

The doctor himself could not have explained why he wished to see the room. There was obviously nothing exceptional about it; it appeared to him the usual kind of visitor's apartment, not belonging to anyone in particular, and therefore without any intimate personal characteristics to proclaim personal ownership. He saw nothing in it to arrest his attention, and he was on the point of leaving the room, satisfied that he had at least passed over the same ground as his patient, when he suddenly felt that he must remain where he was, in the middle of the room, on the very spot, perhaps, where his patient had stood.

And a curious thing happened. He was standing lost in thought, trying to piece together the scattered fragments of the information he had received, trying to break down mental barriers and get in touch with Gweneth's mind, trying to analyse a new idea which had been creeping stealthily into his brain, when he looked up and noticed a door probably leading into a dressing-room. He approached it with a strange reluctance.

He opened it, found it was the door of a big cupboard, and was closing it again, when he caught sight of a large golf-bag in the far-end corner.

"*The golf-bag*," he said in a startled whisper. And he remembered in a lightning flash that this was one of the things on which his patient was harping. He hesitated for a moment, and finally, with an effort of resolution, he moved the golf-bag on to the bed. He took out the driver and the niblick first of all; then the putter, which he examined with a quite unnecessary attentiveness; then the cleek, which he kept in his hands an interminable time; then the brassie, at which he stared as though he had never before seen a brassie with its brass shoe. His manner became slower and more deliberately procrastinating with each successive club. At last he took out a roll.

"A roll," he said slowly, and as he held it in his right hand, his left hand sought and covered his eyes.

"A roll," he said again.

He opened the roll, and found that it consisted of two portraits, one of a most beautiful woman and the other of a young man.

He stood as though turned to stone.

"I see now," he whispered, "her work—her work."

Up to now, only the faintest suspicion of this probability had entered his brain, and then mainly as the result of his conversation with the parlour-maid. He realised, as he was always realising afresh, how hopelessly little even an expert could ever know of the workings of another person's mind. Theories, generalisations, deductions could all be wrecked by some unforeseen development. Yes, this was her work. It was plain to him, from the scattered fragments of her incoherent talk, from the knowledge he had gained of her suffering, her jealousy, her restlessness after the disappearance of the pictures, and her mysterious visits to the spare room where her secret was in hiding. The interesting fact that two of the portraits had been removed confirmed him in his belief: from his vast experience he recognised in this precaution the protecting craft characteristic of the unbalanced mind. Yes, it was her work.

He turned impulsively to the portrait of the beautiful woman, opened it out, and laid it on the floor. He stood staring at it, fascinated, dominated by it.

"It is not a portrait," he thought; "it is a living person. One could never forget it. It would be always there—always haunt-

ing one. It was not fair on her to have such a marvellous picture in the house. It could not have failed to become a living reality to her. She might take it out of its frame—poor, tortured spirit—she might take it out a thousand times—but she would always see it there—always see it in its accustomed place."

And at that moment, as though in answer to his understanding pity, he heard the moaning of the sick woman through the open door.

"Always there—always there," she cried.

He listened. He knew now that he had touched the bedrock of her mental agony.

He replaced the clubs and the pictures in the golf-bag, which he put back into the cupboard, and he hastened to her side. Peace had passed from her, and given way to renewed and increased turmoil.

## V.

DR. NEWBOLD kept his own counsel until the next morning, partly from a chivalrous loyalty to his patient, and partly because he wanted to think things out, and determine in which way the knowledge of this calamity might be used for the benefit of both husband and wife. No scheme presented itself to his puzzled mind, and when he arrived at the Sirrells' house, he had nothing to express beyond the bare statement of a painful fact.

"Mr. Sirrell," he began, "I have made a distressing discovery. I regret to tell you that I believe it was your wife who removed the portraits."

He described to him briefly how he had found them concealed in the golf-bag.

Andrew Sirrell turned deadly pale. He did not speak a single word in answer to the doctor, but rushed out of the room and locked himself in the spare room. When he returned in about ten minutes, his face was drawn and his manner ominously quiet.

"I can never forgive her," he said deliberately—"never."

The doctor made no sign. He was standing at the window staring at the plane trees, now in their sweetest beauty. There was silence in the room, and outside in the street there was an assenting suspension of the traffic.

"An outrage, a sacrilege, an act of incredible debasement," Andrew said.

The doctor still remained speechless.

"I can never forgive her," Andrew repeated—"never."

Dr. Newbold still stood staring at the plane trees.



"And you take her part—you defend her," Andrew said angrily.

"No, I don't defend her," the doctor answered, turning round at last. "But I do say that the portrait is not a portrait; it is a living person, haunting one with an irresistible tyranny."

"Your words are equivalent to a defence," Andrew said bitterly.

"No, pardon me," Dr. Newbold returned, "they are merely an attempt at explanation. I repeat it. The portrait is not a portrait; it is a living force. Your wife ought never have been expected to bear the strain of its influence."

"Nevertheless, she has committed an outrage, a sacrilege," Andrew replied. "I can never forgive her."

"I don't believe you will be called upon to forgive her," Dr. Newbold said quietly. "In a grave case like this, one can only surmise, but I think she is quickly losing ground. The turmoil of her spirit is wearing out the strength of her body. If we knew how to stop the turmoil, we might save her reason and her life. As it is, we have only secured her short spells of partial peace in fragments—poor, tortured spirit."

The gravity of his words and his deep-felt pity for the sufferer awakened in Andrew the sense of his own unworthiness.

"Dr. Newbold," he said, "this discovery has been a great shock to me, but I am behaving like a cur. I take back all my words. I will put all my own feelings on one side. I will do anything and everything to help her back to peace. I entreat of you to tell me what I can do."

Dr. Newbold laid his hand kindly on the man's shoulder.

"Of course, it was a shock to you," he said. "It was a shock to me, a stranger. And to you with your memories, it must, indeed, seem a sacrilege. All that I can understand. But we have to bear in mind that this portrait has become burnt into her brain. She has a gallant face, Mr. Sirrell. It is not the face of a mean-spirited, paltry person. I have no doubt that for a long time she made a brave struggle to live side by side with it and banish its haunting effects from her mind. Well, we know she failed. And she has failed in a double sense. This to me, as a psychologist, is the most tragic part of the story, viewed from her side. She has committed this pitiful deed, and yet she has not succeeded in banishing the picture from her mind's eye. It is always before her—to use her own words—

'always there.' And it will always be there, unless death releases her from its spell, or unless we are able to release her."

"Unless we are able to release her," Andrew repeated to himself.

"Yes," said Dr. Newbold.

"How?" asked Andrew, after a silence.

"I don't know," Dr. Newbold answered.

"Doesn't a great shock sometimes work a miracle?" Andrew asked.

"Yes," Dr. Newbold said. "But in cases like these one never takes the risk until one is fairly sure that nothing else can help. For, you see, a shock may cure, or make matters worse, or kill. But when one judges that the right moment has come, one has to face those chances."

"And you think the right moment has not come yet?" Andrew asked.

"No," the doctor replied. "Her physical strength is failing, I should say; but, all the same, it must be allowed its full innings."

Andrew paced restlessly up and down the room, and his face bore signs of an intense mental agitation. He knew that the doctor was right, and that Gweneth had nothing mean-spirited or paltry about her, and that she had probably fought her fight gallantly up to the limit of her endurance.

"I will do anything and everything to help her back to peace," he exclaimed suddenly.

"I am sure you will," the doctor said. "I rely on your pitifulness—yes, and on your sense of justice. We have the right to trust each other—fellow-blunderers, you remember, belonging to a large company."

"If only she'd left me," Andrew groaned. "If only she'd forsaken me and said as your wife said: '*I leave you to your memories and your pictures.*' That would have been far more just to herself and merciful to me."

His anger and indignation swept over him again in a great wave.

"She has not been fair to me," he cried, in great bitterness of heart.

Then he remembered that he had not been fair to her, and he passed once more through an agony of remorse. When at last he was able to speak, his voice sounded as though wafted from some far distance.

"What kind of shock might have the chance of restoring her, if everything else had failed?" he asked slowly.

"I have not thought that out," Dr. Newbold answered. "I only know vaguely that it should bear directly on the very thing which tortures her—on the portrait."



“ ‘He has killed her.’ ”

Andrew made no comment on the doctor's words, but roused himself sufficiently to communicate with the detectives, and to bid them suspend operations for a few days; and after this effort he drew his chair near to the fire, for it was a bitterly cold and rainy afternoon, and he became immersed in thought. Finally he slept.

And he had a curious dream. He dreamed that he restored the portrait to its frame, and carried it in the middle of the night to his wife's bedroom. When she saw it, she cried out in her distress; "*Always there—always there.*" Then he heard himself saying, in a voice which did not falter: "No, Gweneth, not always there. Because, you see, I don't want it to be always there. And I'm going to take it out of the frame myself, so that you may understand that I do not want it to be always there. Watch me now carefully." He was beginning to cut it out of its frame—with the utmost physical pain and mental reluctance—when he awoke.

"Thank Heaven, it was only a dream," he cried—"a dream, an impossible reality."

He shuddered over the remembrance of it. "Quite impossible," he said. "A sacrilege again, a desecration."

## VI.

DURING the next days Gweneth became worse. Her physical strength was not holding out against the tumult of her mind. Dr. Newbold looked graver, and called in two other brain doctors in consultation. They decided that her only chance was a shock to her nervous system; and when Andrew heard their verdict, he knew that the moment had come when he must fulfil the dictates of his dream, dictates against which he had been appealing with passionate though silent persistence. For his dream had been haunting him, even as the portrait of his first wife was haunting Gweneth. In vain he tried to banish it from his remembrance; in vain he said to himself that it would be impossible for him to do such a deed, even to save Gweneth's life or brain: impossible for him to put that indignity on his dead wife's memory and on his homage to her memory. To all his reasoning and combating always the answer came that his form of homage to the dead had wrought an injury to the living, and that he would not be desecrating his true homage, but expiating his wrong and selfish method of expression.

That same afternoon he went to a picture-framer's and bought some cardboard and various other necessary appliances; and that

same night, without taking anyone into his confidence, without giving Dr. Newbold the barest hint of what he intended to do, he carried out the first part of his dream. He stole, as a thief, into the spare room, brought the roll of pictures downstairs, locked himself in the library, lifted the empty frame down from the wall, and, with the help of cardboard, replaced the portrait of his dead wife and secured it in position as well as he could. When the portrait was once more in its frame, he passed through another tempest of doubt and anguish.

"It will be sacrilege," the false prompter said to him, "sacrilege and desecration."

"It will be the true inner homage," the true prompter said to him.

"An outrage on your natural feelings," the false prompter insisted.

"An expiation of your blind selfishness," the true prompter whispered.

Suddenly, as he stood, torn with conflicting feelings, his face haggard, his body tense with the emotional and mental strain, he heard a terrible noise outside in the hall, and the ominous sound of a struggle. The handle of the door was violently tried. Several people seemed to be dashing themselves against the door itself. He rushed to unfasten it, and there, to his horror, stood Gweneth, with her hair streaming over her shoulders, wild and strong with a sudden and fearful violence, which the two nurses were vainly trying to stem.

"Always there, always there," she cried, and her eyes sought the portrait and found it.

"Always there. I knew it," she cried, pointing to it with increased excitement.

Andrew glanced at her, and threw all his hesitation, all his weakness, all his selfishness, to the winds.

"Not always there, Gweneth," he said quickly and with infinite kindness, "because I don't wish it to be always there. I don't want it to be there at all. Watch carefully what I am going to do."

His words appeared to arrest her attention, and, as one fascinated, she watched him take a knife and loosen the portrait from the frame. She watched it fall to his feet. She watched him lift it up and place it on one side indifferently, as though it were of no value to him. A light came over her face; she turned to him, muttered some incoherent words, and with a deep sigh fell back unconscious into the arms of her attendants.

"He has killed her," they said to each other with unspoken words.

But they were wrong. He had saved her.



INTERIOR OF THE BANK.

## THE BANKING HOUSE OF COUTTS.

BY CAPTAIN CECIL BATTINE.

*Photographs by W. H. Bunnett, Esher.*

**A**N old book in a new cover, and in a very tasteful new cover worthy of its important contents, such is the impression made by the fine building which shelters Coutts' Bank in the Strand. The old cover was on the opposite side of the street until the lease expired, and a bigger house was built on the site of the well-known Lowther Arcade, almost opposite Charing Cross Station. It is lighter and more airy, though less draughty than the old Arcade; its ordered magnificence and the stately vista of offices which stretch away from the door into the Strand contrast with some gems of old-fashioned eighteenth-century elegance. The mat with the three crowns, a symbol which is on all Coutts' cheques, an old porter's chair, the old bronze and mahogany desks fixed at intervals along the counter,

arrest the attention and give proof of a fine taste in preserving these worthy signs of the past in the midst of modern appliances and industry. Visitors are sometimes privileged to penetrate past the long array of desks and counters, and to descend into a veritable catacomb of strong-rooms, barred by artfully contrived doors and surrounded by a fire-proof gallery. Strong-room within strong-room protects the most precious possessions of numerous families, and names well known all over Europe are clearly posted on tiers of boxes of all sizes and sorts.

Returning through the central hall and passing out by the marble statue of Thomas Coutts, to whom the glories of the great banking-house are chiefly due, one may reach a gallery which overlooks the offices by a staircase whose wooden balustrades and

panelling are in excellent taste. In the passages which run round the building are stored the ancient ledgers and letter-books dating back to 1692, all bound alike in solid leather covers with the same artistic lettering. A charming library is fitted up as a reading-room for the staff; the dining-rooms and kitchen are upstairs. Few London houses succeed in being as clean as the bank's staff of housemaids keep their new abode. The rows of books and ledgers have no musty smell, but give forth the odour of fine leather. With a foresight which cannot be too much admired, there has been left a broad roof upon which the *employés* can nowadays take a breath of air after lunch, and upon which in a few short

him. His audacity might well have drawn upon him some painful retribution in the Peking of those days. This wall-paper decorated its former place for eighty years, and not without great difficulty has been bodily transferred. It is quite unlike the much appreciated China papers which are gay with birds and flowers, but represents Chinese life in many phases by a long array of illustrations. There is a demon dance in an open-air theatre with a characteristic audience. The proceedings of a court of justice are portrayed, with the culprit on his knees; all sorts of domestic scenes and curious peeps at Chinese life and customs are shown; nor can it be taken in at a glance. It has been varnished, which gives it a dark yellow

tone. This may have blemished its beauty, but accounts for its perfect preservation. The French sofa, covered by tapestry of the Louis XVI. period, of a soft dove colour with wreaths of flowers, is singularly beautiful and in perfect condition. The chimney-piece and grate are of Adams design, and the old ormolu chandelier now fitted with electric light, on what are made to look like candlesticks, and Louis XVI. furniture, recall the art of the eighteenth century.



A DESK IN THE STOCK DEPARTMENT.

years customers of the bank will be able to alight from hackney or private aeroplanes.

The most interesting room in the building is the large drawing-room known as the "Baroness's Room." Its fine mahogany doors, fitted with handles and locks of Adams design, as well as the furniture, were transplanted bodily from the Baroness Burdett-Coutts' former residence, as also the Chinese wall-paper. This wall-paper is a most wonderful piece of Chinese work, brought to England by the Lord Macartney, who, as British envoy to China, distinguished himself by refusing to "kow tow"—that is, to kneel and bend his head to the floor seven times—at the audience which the Son of Heaven, as the Chinese sovereign is called, accorded to

The history of the famous bank, and of the family to which it owes its greatness, includes much that is interesting of the early records of banking. The Coutts family came from Dundee, where they were burghers of repute. John Coutts, who established the banking-house in Edinburgh, was the son of Patrick Coutts and of Christina Smith. As Lord Provost of Edinburgh he negotiated the surrender of the capital of Scotland to Prince Charles Edward, who marched into the place at the head of the Jacobite clans in 1745. Thomas Coutts was one of several sons born to the Lord Provost. He was educated at the Edinburgh High School, and it was he who migrated to London, became the agent there of the Bank of Scotland, and finally



OFFICE MANAGERS.

chief of the bank which bore his name, and which became of such importance in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Coutts was eccentric but strong-minded, an excellent man of business, and a shrewd judge of human nature. He constantly sought out and befriended individuals who seemed to him to have been badly treated by Fate ; for conventional proprieties he seems to have entertained some contempt, nevertheless his

friends included many of the most important men among his contemporaries.

Thomas Coutts married first Elizabeth Starkie, who had three daughters : Susan, who married the third Earl of Guildford ; Frances, who married John Stuart, first Marquis of Bute ; and Sophia, who married Sir Francis Burdett, the celebrated Parliamentary reformer. Of Lady Bute's children, Lady Frances Stuart became Countess of Harrowby,

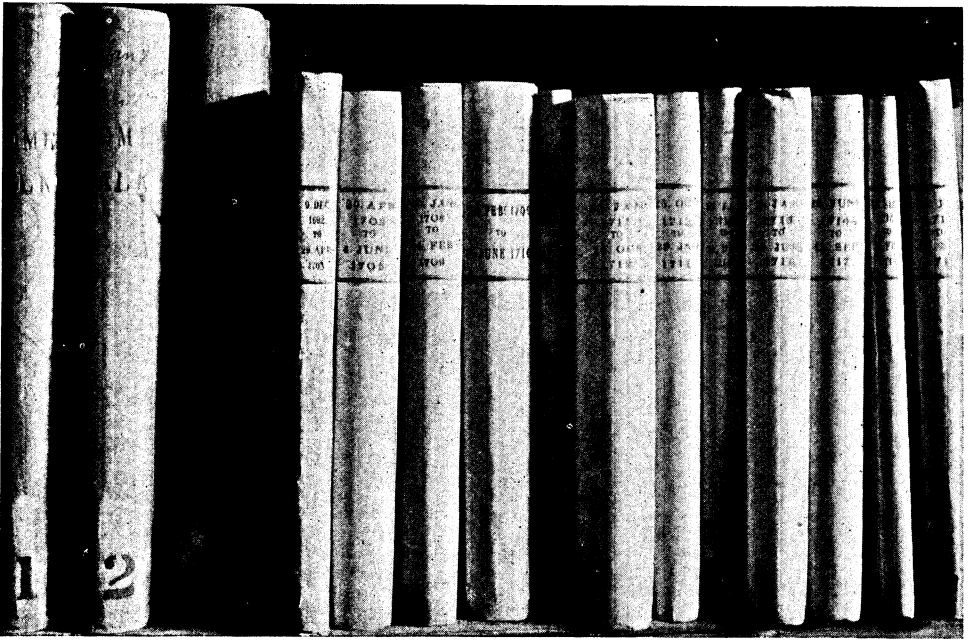


CORRESPONDENTS.



and Lord Thomas Stuart married a daughter of Lucien Buonaparte. One of the best-known stories about Thomas Coutts is the legend of the lucky guinea, and the following is one of several versions. Like some other rich men, he preferred to dress as if he were a poor one. On one occasion he was at Brighton as the guest of the Prince Regent. As he was sitting on a bench outside the Pavilion, an old lady passed him and took pity on his apparently forlorn condition. "You seem to have known better days, my poor old fellow," said she, and tipped him a guinea. The Prince approached them from behind with some friends, and to the old

fond of bright society, constantly patronised the playhouses and their performers, both actors and actresses. These were the days when old Drury Lane Theatre had to be pulled down to prevent it from falling down of its own accord, so that the support of Coutts' Bank was doubtless very acceptable to the stage. Among the friends he made was a young actress of considerable talent and distinction named Harriot Mellon. This lady had already attained a position in her profession which enabled her to extend charitable assistance to many of her comrades, including Edmund Kean. She soon became intimate with the Coutts family, and retained the



SOME OLD LETTER BOOKS.

lady's surprise walked up, slapped her *protégé* on the back, and said: "Tom Coutts, we have fined you a bottle for leaving us." The guinea has been kept in the bank as a mascotte. The famous Lord Dundonald, whose imprudence led him into trouble with his contemporaries, was one of Coutts' intimate friends, and so was the author of *Waverley*. In 1825 Sir Walter Scott deposited £2,500 to purchase a troop for his son in the 15th Hussars. But the romance of Thomas Coutts' life was reserved for his old age.

The strenuous pursuit of wealth even in those days was balanced by intellectual amusements after business hours. Coutts was very

friendship of the daughters after their exalted marriages. Mrs. Coutts had become a hopeless invalid, and Harriot became the comrade as well as the friend of her husband. Their innocent friendship excited much malevolent gossip among the mean-spirited crowd who envied the wealth of the man and the good looks and talents of the woman. On one occasion, when the Coutts were present in a box, she appeared on the stage wearing a paste necklace which she had bought, having agreed to pay for it by instalments. The next day appeared in print an anonymous squib describing how a meretricious actress had flaunted her spoils before the family she had ruined, and obligingly



OUTSIDE ONE OF THE STRONG-ROOMS.

stating that the gems were of fabulous value. Such spiteful attacks caused their object deep grief and mortification, but they worked to her advantage in more ways than one, for the chivalry and obstinacy of Thomas Coutts were both stirred by them, so that, when at length his first wife's sufferings were ended by merciful death, he insisted on marrying Miss Mellon. He shortly afterwards died and left her the bulk of his immense fortune.

The life-story of this lady also bears recording as an instance of a woman's rise from the lowest to the highest station in life, and of her being able to play her part with honour and success in both rôles. Her mother was an Irish peasant, and her father an officer in the service of the East India Company, who died at sea. Harriot's mother followed the theatrical profession as a dresser, but she had great ambition for her daughter,



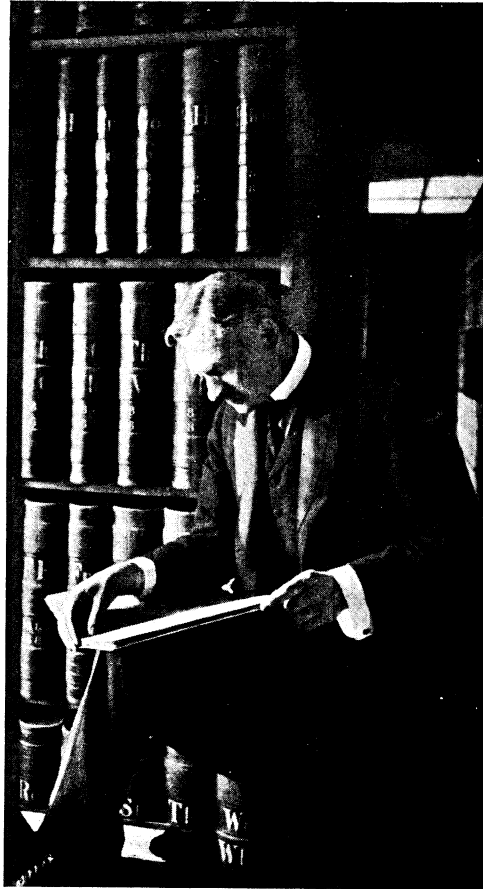
THE PORTRAIT ROOM.

whom she worshipped, and to whom she contrived to give a fair elementary education. She was inordinately vain, and gave way to fits of passionate anger which completely mastered her. Under the influence of blind fury, she not only administered the rod to her daughter with cruel severity, but even perpetrated less excusable severities. On one occasion, for example, when quite a little thing, she put her under the pump and pumped cold water on her until she fainted away. When with difficulty the child had been restored to consciousness by the help of the neighbours, her undisciplined mother gave vent to equally passionate demonstrations of joy and love. She was, in fact, a Celtic peasant, with the primitive, and at times savage, nature which is found occasionally among those people. Little Harriot grew to be a merry child, in spite of the terror of her mother engendered by repeated whippings for trivial faults. She learnt by heart with extraordinary rapidity, and when quite young appeared on the stage in childish parts. At Stafford one cold winter day she disappeared, and her part was performed by a comrade. Later in the day she turned up with her face all black, wet through, and shivering with cold and exhaustion, at the lodgings of the manager. She was made to relate what had happened. Her mother had whipped her so severely for some fault that she had fled from the house in the sleet and rain, and had taken refuge in the chimney of a kiln. Just as she concluded her tale, her mother broke into the house in search of her, vowing vengeance for her misconduct in running away. Harriot implored the manager to keep her, but in those days parental

authority was not to be lightly interfered with, and the girl was restored to her mother after the latter had been forced to promise to treat her well.

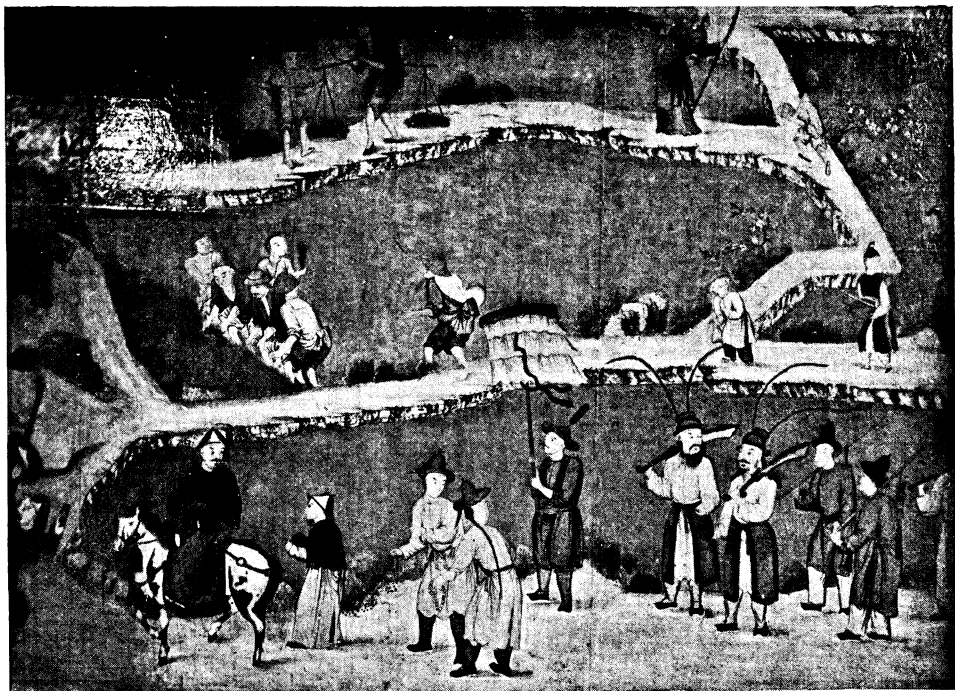
The day dawned at last when Harriot Mellon escaped from this thrall and started her successful career as an actress in London. She speedily attracted attention and rose to a sound position in the profession, but before that was accomplished she had had the

inevitable period of struggle and had toured the provincial towns. She was acting a part at Portsmouth one night to an audience, a big proportion of which belonged to the Fleet. She had to say these words: "I will blithely be a model housewife if any man will make an honest woman of me." "By Heaven, then, I will!" shouted a boyish voice, "and I draw two months' pay next Tuesday!" It came from a midshipman, and he meant it; but Miss Mellon had to decline the offer, which was equally flattering to her personality and to her acting. As Mrs. Coutts, Harriot played her part well in spite of the jealousy and malice which she encountered in certain quarters. She quickly adapted herself to her new position, and when her wedded life was cut short by Thomas Coutts' death,

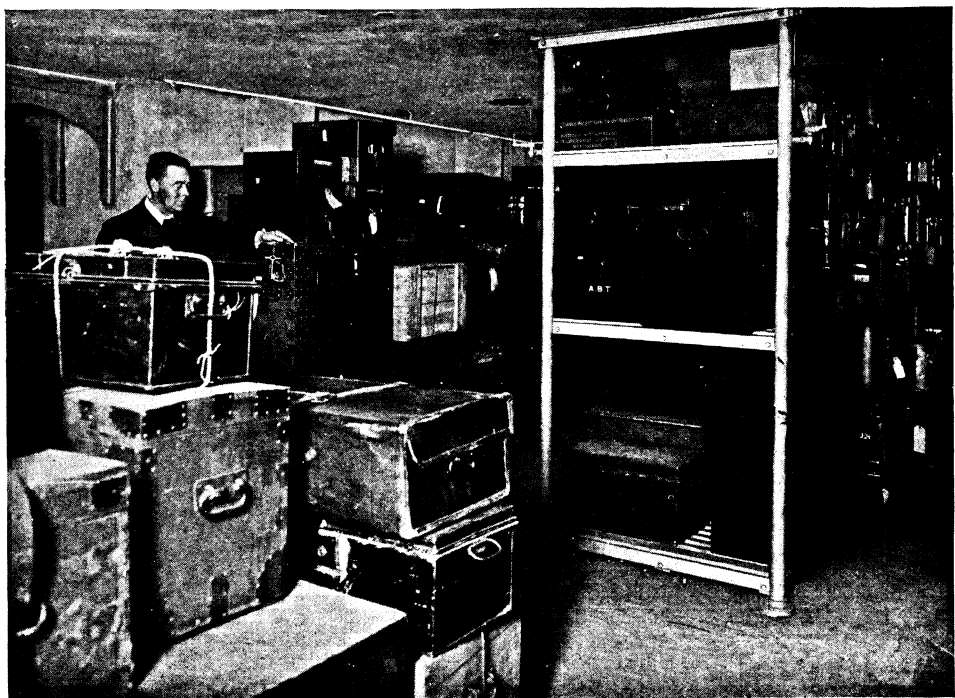


A STUDENT OF ANCIENT LITERATURE.

she found herself the possessor of the bulk of his great fortune, a fortune which was immense for those days, when private fortunes were still limited to reasonable figures. She was at once courted by various distinguished people, including, it is said, Frederic, Duke of York, the next heir to the Throne after the Princess Charlotte of Wales. The most assiduous of these wooers was the Duke of St. Albans, whom she eventually married after considerable hesitation. He



A SECTION OF THE FAMOUS CHINESE WALL-PAPER IN THE SITTING-ROOM KNOWN AS "THE BARONESS'S."



ONE OF THE STRONG-ROOMS.



THE CLERKS' LIBRARY.

died and left her a widow once again. There is a picture of the Duchess of St. Albans in the bank, dressed in the quaint finery of the period. At her death she bequeathed the vast fortune of Thomas Coutts back to his descendants, and the greater part of it fell to Miss Angela Burdett, the daughter of Sir Francis Burdett, the reformer, who took the name of Burdett-Coutts by Royal licence, and was subsequently created a peeress by Queen Victoria. Even in those days journalists were arising who anticipated certain literary ventures of modern vogue, not by computing how many old women piled one on the top of another would reach to the moon, but by such statistics as the following: The *Morning Herald* announced that Miss Angela Burdett-Coutts was left one million eight hundred thousand pounds. This money in gold weighed thirteen tons, seven cwt., three quarters,

twelve pounds, and would require one hundred and seven men to lift it, if each carried two hundred and eighty-nine pounds—*i.e.*, the weight of a sack of flour!

The public have become so accustomed to the daily use of banks that they have grown to regard them with matter-of-fact complacency as part of their inheritance, just as much as the post-office, the motor-bus, and other conveniences and luxuries of modern city life.

Few carry their imagination back to the days when the safe delivery of a letter was an uncertain and perhaps difficult thing to achieve, unless it has been brought home to them by having lived in some newly colonised district of South Africa or South America; nor does the ordinary individual realise how great is the debt we owe to our banking system, nor conversely how commerce is hindered and delayed where confidence and credit do not exist, where money has to be carried about by its owner



A STORE OF OLD LETTERS.



TWO MORE SECTIONS OF THE CHINESE WALL-PAPER, WHICH WAS TRANSFERRED INTACT FROM THE OLD BUILDING TO THE NEW.

sometimes in coin, and at the personal risk of the possessor. The greater security of property in England than on the Continent, and the brisker interchange of wealth, in the eighteenth century, the period in which modern banking was evolved, doubtless helped us to establish our financial superiority, a pre-eminence which we held as indisputably for nearly fifty years after Waterloo, as the Italian republics and later the Low Countries held it in the day of their prosperity. Some records of early banking transactions are quaint and interesting compared to the practice of to-day. Generally speaking, of course, greater caution, particularly in the matter of loans and overdrafts, was essential, yet there are some touching instances of mutual confidence. One cannot help wondering whether any two important personages of the world of sport to-day could mutually draw on one another's banking account without friction, as did George Selwyn and Lord March, afterwards well known as Duke of Queensberry and "Old Q." The great Duke of Wellington banked at Coutts'. A certain artist, having painted a portrait of him, came

for his remuneration. The Duke proceeded to count out a number of notes and coins somewhat laboriously and slowly. The artist thereupon ventured to suggest that a cheque on his bankers would do equally well, and save his Grace the trouble of counting out the money; but the victor of Waterloo turned on him with some bitterness and said: "Do you think I want Messrs. Coutts to know what a fool I have made of myself?" It is just possible that this anecdote was invented by the friends of the artist. At any rate, he is unlikely to have related it himself, and it is quite certain that it did not come from Wellington.

Among the famous men and women who have banked at Coutts' were Pitt, Fox, Nelson, George III. and his Queen, George IV., William IV., and Queen Victoria. The Orleans princes, King Edward and Queen Alexandra are customers of the bank at the present time, besides numerous foreign celebrities and princes. Truly an institution which has earned such world-wide confidence must be a legitimate object of public pride.



THE LUCKY GUINEA.

*Photographs by Charles Haigh.*





“‘Thank you very muchum,’ said Emma Blades. ‘I’d prefer not to.’”

## A VICIOUS CIRCLE.

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE INSTINCT OF THE CAT AND OF THE DOG.

BY BARRY PAIN.



LADY VERMOISE did not ask Mrs. Palton for the 14th, when many desirable people would have been met. Now, Lady Vermoise had professed affection for Angela Palton, and was distantly related to her.

It may have been carelessness on the part of Lady Vermoise. It may have been a reflection that Mrs. Palton was “not quite—well, just a little—rather, eh? You know

what I mean.” And it may have been a touch of conscience that made Lady Vermoise ask Mrs. Palton for the 19th, when, however, on her own showing, there would be nobody but George (George is a perfect idiot).

Mrs. Palton’s refusal for the 19th was perfectly charming and polite. “I don’t dream of letting her think that I’ve taken offence,” she said to her husband. “All the same——”

### II.

Mrs. Palton’s cook, Emma Blades, was a woman of character, three years in her last place, an early riser, fond of children, and

had other qualities which deserve and should receive our admiration and respect.

Mrs. Palton gave one of her dinner-parties—biennial, allowing time for recovery before the next. Emma Blades did her very best. She did not spare herself. Everything was beautiful.

Mrs. Palton may have been tired next morning—could you wonder? It may have simply never occurred to her. Certainly she omitted any word of compliment to Emma Blades next morning, and Emma noticed it.

Mrs. Palton showed more thoughtfulness later in the day, when she reflected that there would only be the cutlets to warm up, to be followed by the remainder *macédoine*, and told Emma that she could go out that evening.

"Thank you very muchum," said Emma Blades. "I'd prefer not to." It was said with a refrigerated respectfulness.

"Ho, yes," said Emma Blades to the house-parlourer after, "I wasn't going to show I'd troubled my 'ead about it. But, however, when it comes to favours——"



"It had been sent out for exercise with the second footman. But the second footman was heavy with Benedictine."

### III.

Emma Blades was not only aunt, but also godmother to her married sister's youngest, Doris, aged ten, who needs to control her temper—her mother has admitted it. And Emma Blades practically never forgot that Doris had a birthday on May 3, and signified the same in the usual manner.

But, of course, a biennial dinner-party may put everything out of anybody's head. Besides, Emma had a bad memory for dates. It was June 7 before she discovered that she had forgotten our Doris's birthday. She hastened at once to an act of reparation.

She sent Doris macaroons—and it is none of your business where Emma Blades got them from. They were packed in the card box which had contained the nouse-parlourer's collars, and enclosed with them was an old birthday-card which Emma had bread-crumbed from a love of cleanliness, and very nearly fried from the force of natural sequence.

And Doris wrote on a post-card: "Dear Arnty, Meny thanks for your kind biskwits."

"For she shan't think I care," said Doris. Notwithstanding, not one of those biscuits would she eat. She gave them to a strange dog in the park.

## IV.

Now, that dog was the property of Lady Vermoise. It had been sent out for exercise with the second footman. But the second footman was heavy with Benedictine; for, as he had observed to the first footman, if he did not take it, somebody else would, so he had slept in Battersea Park and left the physical development to the dog.

It was a small black dog, reputed to be of Japanese extraction. It was all fluff and bark. Lady Vermoise called the black dog "Snowball." In fact, all her ladyship's friends admitted that she was full of humour; and, after all, it is what our friends say about us which really matters.

At tea-time the second footman, by command, brought in Snowball. No dog is really the better for four large macaroons, and in any case there was something Japanese and bizarre about Snowball's disposition. He lay under a chair and snarled.

"Know what that means?" Lady Vermoise asked her guests brightly. "Snowball and I are not *quile*—just a teeny-weeny—well, he had to have a little lesson from me. Dogs that snatch at things which are offered them have them taken away again, don't they, Snowball? It happened at breakfast-time. You should witness an interesting *rapprochement*. Here, Snowball, is the shortbread to which you are addicted. Gently, now. *De la douceur, Boule-de-neige, calme-toi tes transports!*"

Upon which Snowball, with rapidity and decision, bit Lady Vermoise in the fleshy part of her hand.

## THE PIPER OF THE TWILIGHT.

**L**ITTLE Piper, unseen Piper,  
Through the shadows going,  
Piping to your love, the daughter  
Of the sedges and the water,  
Her whose white feet showing  
But a moment 'neath the flowing  
Folds of misty robes allure thee  
To thy music; reassure me,  
Piper, little unseen Piper,  
That she will not always flee.

Little Piper, unseen Piper,  
On your thin reed blowing  
Notes you caught from yonder cloud,  
Melancholy violet shroud  
For the day that's going;  
Pipe you thus from sad foreknowing  
All the bitterness of "Never,"  
And that ever and for ever,  
Piper, little unseen Piper,  
You must follow, she must flee?

LAURENCE NORTH.

# MISS MENTOR AND I.

By JESSIE POPE.



WHEN Miss Mentor suggested we should have a day in the country together, I was delighted to agree to the arrangement. My people had gone to Trouville, and left me behind to continue my art-

school classes, and because they said the place might not suit me, as I was growing so fast. From what I had heard of Tronville, I thought it would suit me excellently; but when one has two good-looking grown-up sisters who won't stand any nonsense, one has to grin and bear a lot of things. Miss Mentor is my old governess, and we are quite devoted to each other, principally because we are so exactly opposite in every respect. She is frightfully learned, and I am hopelessly ignorant; she is small, standing five feet half-an-inch, while I stand five feet eleven and a half in my gym. shoes; she is very old, at least forty-five, and I am eighteen next April; she is dark, with a fierce expression, and I am fair, with a frivolous one. Anyhow, whatever the reason might be for our mutual attraction, the last term I was at school she used to take me out with her to the British Museum and the National Gallery and other places of interest, where her knowledge was so wonderful that she saved us quite a lot in catalogues, and her quickness to quarrel with anyone she thought might be trespassing on her rights as a woman kept us in excitements. But she was most dangerous when she insisted on putting some of her extraordinary theories into practice, and as I was too much under her thumb to oppose her, I felt pretty certain that our proposed expedition would have quite the usual number of adventures, if not more.

"Now, my theory is," said Miss Mentor, when we discussed plans, "that a day's holiday is a suitable opportunity of putting to a practical test some of those schemes for the betterment of the social condition of the rustic classes that have occurred to one

during term-time. That is what I now propose to do, and bicycling suggests itself as a suitable mode of progression."

"I did not know you could ride," I said.

"I *have* ridden," she replied sternly, "but I have not a bicycle. Have you?"

"No," I said sadly; then a bright idea occurred to me, and I added: "Phyllis and Freda have left theirs behind. They'll only be rusting their heads off in the coach-house; we might borrow them."

"Doubtless," said Miss Mentor, "your sisters will be indebted to us for exercising their machines. In any case, my theory is that we should assist our friends to be unselfish by anticipating their generosity. They are grateful afterwards." (As a matter of fact, Phyllis and Freda weren't a bit, but the state of the machines when returned may have accounted for that.)

We decided, therefore, on a bicycle ride of not less than twenty-five miles, our exact route to be arranged as we went along. Miss Mentor insisted on taking a tea-basket and a pair of blue goggles, while I carried a stock of chocolate creams, in case I should be hungry when she wasn't, and a lot of hair-pins and fringe-nets, my hair being a constant anxiety, as I had not yet got the knack of making it keep up for any length of time. It came down in the station, to start with, for instance, and added to my fluster and confusion, for the platform was crowded and I seemed to get in everybody's way, as usual, the consequence of having so much more of myself than I knew what to do with. We were each leading our borrowed bicycles and taking train to Willerby, thirty miles out, so that, as Miss Mentor said, we should get quite clear of London traffic.

"Now, my theory is," said Miss Mentor, "that when taking a journey, one should not rely on the information of individuals as to one's train, but take a consensus of official opinion. Start on that porter."

"Is this the Willerby train, please?" I said, unintentionally catching him on the ankle with my pedal. He had red hair and—after the spasm of pain had left it—a cheery face.

"Yes, that's right, miss," he said.

"Don't you believe him," said Miss Mentor.

"Ask the guard, and I will sound the ticket-inspector." The porter's information was corroborated in each case, which, as Miss Mentor said, looked very suspicious, but the bookstall boy was more than doubtful, and a woman in the waiting-room said she'd never known the Willerby train start from that platform before, while the engine-driver, when approached, was so surly we could not be sure whether he said "Yes" or "No." Unfortunately, the next official I questioned referred me back to my original guard, who seemed to have suddenly got tired, and the red-haired porter also appeared to have lost all enthusiasm in the subject under Miss Mentor's renewed cross-examination.

"However," she said, "we have now enough information to go on with"; and we selected a carriage, through the opposite window of which Miss Mentor repeated her question to a man who was on the line with his back towards us. It was the red-haired porter again, and his face grew quite drawn with exasperation, but he came to the window.

"Yes—right for Willerby," he said. Then, whether he dived under the carriage, I don't know, but next moment his face appeared at the other window. "*This* is the Willerby train, ladies," he said, and then as the train started, his red head once more appeared at the window as he ran alongside saying: "All right for Willerby, and don't you forget it, mum!"

The sound of official laughter on the platform we were leaving brought a hot blush to my cheek.

"Did he mean that for impertinence?" cried Miss Mentor threateningly.

"Oh, no," I said soothingly; "I think it was only a little joke."

"The two are synonymous," she retorted, glancing round for the communication cord, "and if I were convinced he intended either, I would stop the train and report him."

"Oh, no, Miss Mentor," I cried in alarm, "I think he only wanted a tip."

"A tip, indeed!" she exclaimed. "If I tipped all the people I asked questions of, I should soon be ruined"; and she made a queer little noise in her throat—something between a chuckle and a hiccough, but which must have been a hiccough, because her face, when I quickly looked at it, was as stern as usual.

As a matter of fact, it *was* the Willerby train, and two hours later we were leading our bicycles through the little town, on the look-out for a gentle down-grade which Miss Mentor said would make a convenient starting point for our twenty-five-mile tour. We

found one just outside the town, and adjusting her goggles, Miss Mentor prepared to mount. She put an unnecessary amount of jerk into the effort and punished the saddle heavily, and the bicycle wobbled so much that twice I thought she was off; but with squared elbows and tightened lips she stuck to it, and gaining a sort of balance, with the pedal well in the middle of her foot, she went grinding along down the road. I duplicated her performance, more or less, and our ride had begun. It was over in about five minutes, for we hadn't gone more than four hundred yards when, in an awful voice, Miss Mentor ejaculated—

"Who's got hold of my foot?"

I looked quickly round to see, giving a sickening lurch as I did so, and said—

"No one."

"Ah! but someone is pulling me back—holding my ankle tighter every minute!" I thought the excitement had unhinged her mind; but her face, though full of resentment, was perfectly sane.

"Perhaps it's cramp," I said. "Get off——" Then I heard a cart coming behind. "Oh, do get off!" I said, "there's something coming!"

"I can't—I'm tight!" she cried; and as she spoke, she gently heeled over on the top of me, and we both collapsed with a metallic clatter in the dusty road.

I wriggled away from underneath her as gently as I could, and tried to extricate her from her bicycle, but found she was fixed to it in some curious way—and then the cause of the trouble dawned on me. A loop of braid which bound the hem of her skirt had become entangled round the pedal, and with each revolution she had trussed herself still more firmly to the machine, and my efforts to disentangle her seemed to have no effect, till I found the cart had stopped and a man was at my side dexterously using his pocket-knife until he had freed Miss Mentor and helped her on her feet. It was while he was very kindly brushing me down that I noticed for the first time—I had been too distressed to do so before—that he was young and attractive-looking, with light-coloured eyes, a brown face, and a pleasant expression. But Miss Mentor turned on him fiercely.

"Young man," she exclaimed, "let this be a lesson to you to drive more carefully. I shall certainly hold you responsible for any damage—or, rather, your master—but you may tell him from me that even butchers are not allowed to slaughter helpless women by the roadside."



"We both collapsed with a metallic clatter in the dusty road."

For a moment I stood aghast, staring first at the gentleman and his smart dog-cart and then back to Miss Mentor.

"But, Miss Mentor," I said, "he didn't run into you."

"Well, he ran into you, and you ran into me, which comes to the same thing," she panted.

"No—no!" I cried. "It was you who

got your foot tangled in your braid, and knocked me over as you fell."

"*Never* say that to me again!" she exclaimed, and I was so scared by her tone that I never did.

"I'm afraid the bicycles have suffered," said the young man. "This brake's smashed, and these spokes are broken. Can I take them back to Willerby for you to be



repaired, or is there anything I can do?"

"No—I thank you," said Miss Mentor coldly; "you have done quite enough as it is."

At that he got into his dog-cart without another word and drove away.

"He was a well-spoken young man for a butcher," said Miss Mentor thoughtfully, "and his voice seemed familiar to me."

"He wasn't a butcher, he was a gentleman," I said, showing as much indignation in my voice as I dared.

"Then why did he wear a butcher's long blue coat?"

"He didn't; it was a brown dust-coat."

"Don't tell me my accident has resulted in colour-blindness!" she cried apprehensively; then she snatched off her blue goggles and looked after the disappearing dog-cart. "Ah!" she said, "the spectacles have deceived me. I was mistaken. I see it is not a blue butcher's coat. However, it is too late to rectify the mistake, but I regret it."

I regretted still more that she had sent him away, for by this time a small crowd had collected, including two tramps, a girl with a baby in a perambulator, an errand-boy, and a dog.

"Did you run into yer mar, or what?" said one of the tramps to me.

"What!" ejaculated Miss Mentor in disgust at being mistaken for my "mar," but

her remark sounded so much like an answer to his question, that everybody laughed aloud, except me, and I had mastered the trick of laughing silently in my throat at school.

"Come away at once from these ribald ruffians," said Miss Mentor, and as the dog at that moment began to bark at us for some reason, I was very glad to.

The man at the bicycle-shop shook his head over the machines and gave such a large estimate for repairs that Miss Mentor decided he was dishonest and declined to let him have anything to do to them, and in the end we led them back to the station, left them in the cloak-room, and restarted our day's outing on foot.

"After all," said Miss Mentor, as we went briskly along the country high-road, "we shall be better able to study rural life afoot than a wheel, for I have noticed, when on a bicycle, the preservation of one's own life is a more absorbing consideration than the condition of the lives of others; and now that I have ampler leisure to

study the fair landscape on either side of me, I am immediately reminded of the sordid limitations of the city slums we have left behind us. Now, my theory is that with one bold sweep these smiling parklands should be made the property of the toiling workers. What do *you* think?"

I said: "*I* think that little hillock among



"By this time a small crowd had collected."

the bracken over there looks just the place for lunch." Miss Mentor agreed with my suggestion, but rebuked what she called my typically modern attitude towards distress and suffering; but, as a matter of fact, I was too painfully hungry myself to be sympathetic just then.

When, however, I had consumed twelve sandwiches and a lot of fizzy lemonade, I did listen with great interest and pity to what she told me about the poorer classes, as I leaned back contentedly among the bracken and gazed at the beautiful park and old Manor House standing among the trees beneath us.

"Whose place is that, my man?" said Miss Mentor to a passing rustic.

"T'Squire's," answered the man curtly, as he continued his way.

"Is it not abominable," said Miss Mentor, "that one puny man should monopolise so much of our fair land? A step-sister of mine married a rich man. They are both dead, but their son is now the owner of just such another estate as this. It is in this district, too, but I never see him. His father and mother would never listen to reason, and why should he? So he must go his own way. And he was such a dear little boy."

The sight of the Manor House seemed to quite spoil her lunch.

"That Squire," she said, "ought not to be allowed to keep his park. It ought to be taken from him. But how much better if he would give it voluntarily to his poorer brothers!"

"Yes," I assented.

"Now, my theory is," exclaimed Miss Mentor, with a sudden fire in her eye, "that he should retain his house and garden, and give up his park *voluntarily*, and that *you* should ask him to do it."

"*Me!*" I cried, starting up. "I couldn't! Absolutely!"

"You could," she said, "and, what's more,

you *will*, when you think of your poor sisters stifling in poisonous streets for want of a sweet breath of country air. I will accompany you and support you with my arguments. We will go at once, and if success meets your efforts, the everlasting gratitude of the multitude will be yours."

"But I know what squires are like," I exclaimed apprehensively. "I've read about them in books. They are red-faced men with hooked noses and piercing eyes, and they always have white side-whiskers and hot tempers. I simply haven't the courage, Miss Mentor."

"But *I* should be with you," she said, and drew herself up to her full height.

"Well, *you* ask, and I will be with *you*," I said, looking down on her.

"No," she replied, "it is youth, youth alone, that wins. Listen. I will tell you a little story which I think will make you sacrifice your own feelings when so great a blessing for others is at stake." And she told me a very pathetic story of a work-girl—just my age, curiously enough—who had to work when the sun shone, as I used to at school, and who hated it so much—like me again—that she died. I never got so far as that, but I got far enough to feel thoroughly sympathetic with the poor girl, and the story made such an impression on me that I told Miss Mentor I would

do what she suggested, and, in fact, began to feel rather keen on being a martyr for the People.

All the same, when we were actually walking up the fine, sweeping drive to the house, which looked dreadfully imposing as we drew nearer, my knees began to feel a bit jellified. The chocolate almonds which I conveyed secretly to my mouth did not contain their usual comfort, and the front door opened so quickly to Miss Mentor's



"They are red-faced men with hooked noses and piercing eyes."

thunderous knock that I had to swallow one whole to get rid of it.

"We wish to speak to the Squire," said Miss Mentor, handing her card to a stately and noble-looking gentleman, who I thought at first was the Squire himself, but who turned out to be the butler. By that time I was devoutly praying he might say his master was out; but he asked us in, and next minute was showing us across a great big hall to the

it wasn't hooked, after all, and his face wasn't red, but brown, with light-coloured eyes and a pleasant expression, and he was, in fact, no other than the young man in the dog-cart. From a scuffling sound behind me, I gathered Miss Mentor had also had trouble with the floor, but I was too overcome with my own embarrassment to pay her much attention.

"I—I—beg your pardon," I blurted out, my mind feeling a perfect chaos before the



"It was a most delicious meal, served under the big cedar tree on the lawn."

library. I have two vivid impressions about that library—the first was that a man was standing at the far end with his back to the window, the second that the floor was too highly polished for safety, not to mention dignity. As it was, I blundered awkwardly on to a mat, which skidded with me right across the floor, and brought me up with a jerk almost under the Squire's hooked nose; and before I could recover from that, I saw

direct glance of his clear grey eyes, "but I have come to ask you if you will give your park to the people? Miss Mentor says you can keep the house and garden."

For a moment I thought he was going to burst out laughing, and if he had, I should have burst out crying; but by some wonderful means he seemed to know this, and pulled himself together, though his face got quite stern with the effort.

"It is not mine to give," he said gravely; "it is entailed, and passes to my heir at my death."

"Then that's more abominable still," ejaculated Miss Mentor, who had sideslipped up to us at this moment. "We came to give you the opportunity of voluntary sacrifice. It seems even that privilege is denied you as a member of our enslaved aristocracy."

He turned his glance slowly from me to look at her. As he did so, his eyes suddenly narrowed, his lips twitched at the corners, and, stepping forward, he put both hands on her shoulders and kissed her. You could have knocked me down with a feather. As for Miss Mentor, her sallow face suddenly flamed scarlet as she recoiled from him in absolute horror. He looked quite hurt.

"Why, auntie," he said, "we've had hundreds of kisses before, and you never used to mind."

"It's *my* little Archie!" cried Miss Mentor, with a break in her voice, and she threw her arms around his neck and kissed him again and again, and I felt dreadfully out of it.

"And to think you remembered me!" she cried, almost in hysterics, "and I thought you were a young butcher!"

"I didn't know you then, with your blue goggles on," he said, laughing, "but you will admit now that I didn't knock you off your bicycle."

"I'll admit anything," replied his softened and tearful auntie; "but I wish I had recognised you, my dear boy."

"So do I," he said, "then I could have brought you both home to lunch. However,

we'll make up for it at tea." And we did, for it was a most delicious meal, served under the big cedar tree on the lawn. Miss Mentor and her new-found nephew naturally did most of the talking; but I didn't mind, for the chocolate cakes at my elbow were really the most exquisite I had ever tasted. Besides, he smiled at me now and then, and I smiled at him, and though we didn't say much, we felt friendlier every minute. After tea, he showed us round the garden and the stables, and not another word was said about his giving his park to the people, which was a great relief to my mind.

He drove us to the station, and came up to town the next day, and, in fact, he seemed so fond of his aunt that whenever Miss Mentor and I went out together, he came too. I thought his devotion to her was very beautiful, until he told me one day that the reason he came with us was because he considered, from his experience, we were not to be trusted out by ourselves. Of course, he said that privately, and we had a great deal of time for private conversation, while Miss Mentor was busy thinking out her theories.

When my people came back from Trouville, I was not surprised to hear that both Phyllis and Freda were engaged, but their astonishment to hear that *I* was, too, was not very flattering. Still, I think everybody was pleased, certainly Archie and I were, and when Miss Mentor said: "My theory is that when young people fall in love at first sight, they'd better get married," we thought the idea so sound that we have decided to act upon it on the twenty-sixth of this month.

## AT SALRUCK, CONNEMARA.

**T**HE greyest tombs, the rudest graves,  
Among gnarled ash-trees century-old,  
Beside the Little Killary's waves,  
Lie close in the wild mountain's fold.

So weathered they wear out no more,  
Close-clustered circlewise they've lain  
Since fair Cuchullin loved, before  
Patrick was born or Arthur slain.

Still the lone, furtive peasant folk  
Lay on them offerings to their dead—  
A pot, a pipe of clay to smoke,  
Milk, usquebaugh, a crust of bread.

# BIANCA'S DAUGHTER.

By JUSTUS MILES FORMAN,

*Author of "The Garden of Lies," "Tommy Carteret," "The Quest," etc.*

**SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.**—The two Blakes, father and son, shared most of each other's tastes and moods—for the two men had been a great deal together for some ten years after the son had left the University, and had travelled much together in remote parts of the world—and out of their very sympathy the younger man, Richard Blake, became aware that his father seemed strangely oppressed with either physical pain or mental anxiety in the midst of Mrs. Cartwright's ballroom, and this impression seemed due to the sudden pointing out of a *débutante*, a Miss Vittoria Fleming, whose rare beauty was the talk of the room. But the older man declared himself only bored, after all, and Richard speedily forgot the circumstance in the new interest of dance and conversation with the beautiful Miss Fleming, who had hitherto lived all her life at the country seat of her father. On her mother's side she was descended from a distinguished Italian family, but since that mother's death her father, Pender Fleming, had lived the life of a complete recluse, and Bianca's daughter was now entering the larger world beyond her Hampshire home for the first time. She and Richard Blake at this first meeting became conscious of some influence binding their lives together for good or ill, but on his return home from the dance, he found his father anxious to persuade him to embark with him on a long foreign cruise. He talked to his father of the dance and of the arresting beauty and rare personality of Miss Fleming, only to draw from the older man an agitated entreaty that he would not allow himself to fall in love with the girl. Simultaneously Vittoria was asking her hostess many questions about the mother whom she had never known, and, incidentally, some about her new friend. Yet neither the man nor the girl learned anything that could have explained either the distress of the elder Blake or Mrs. Dudley's reluctance to answer Vittoria's questions at all frankly. Then Blake and Vittoria met again at a dinner-party, without becoming any better acquainted; but later on he happened to be in the Park when the girl's horse bolted, and succeeded in stopping the frightened animal while Vittoria cleared her foot from the stirrup by which she was being dragged, and their friendship seemed to be developed by this open moment of danger and rescue. Even then, however, circumstances prevented Blake from seeing the girl again before she left town, and he considered her departure as the decree of Fate that he was not to succumb to the attraction against which he had fought with all the strength of a man who wanted to remain free at all costs. Thus much he confessed to Mrs. Faring, only to learn that she and her husband had taken a house in the country, but a short drive from the Flemings' home. Meanwhile, Vittoria had been welcomed home by her father and his neighbour, Beau Temple, "the novelist of the chosen few," and her own lifelong friend, who had only been awaiting her return from her first season in the great world to ask her if she could come to look upon him as a husband. To her father, when he urged her to accept the proposal, the girl said: "I'm very fond of him. The only question is, am I fond enough, and in the right way? I dare say I am." But all the time she wondered why Richard Blake had disappeared out of her life again without word or sign.

## CHAPTER IX.

### A FEW QUIET DAYS.



VITTORIA passed the week following her return to Standish very restfully and pleasantly. Now that the interest and excitement of the season were over, she found that the long strain of activity and the insufficient sleep had taxed her strength much more than she had realised, and she was glad to be completely idle for a time. She rode a little, either alone or with Beaumont Temple, and once or twice she played tennis—very much off her form—and often she took long, rambling, leisurely walks across the hills and uplands, attended only by one of the Gordon setters or by her Irish terrier, Mr. Hennessy.

She had abundant time in these days to look back over the past five months, to

re-live them in fancy, as all women, and particularly all girls, love to do. The period stood out from the rest of her life as letters printed in red stand out from a black-and-white page, and sometimes it was difficult for her to believe that it was really true and not a sort of Cinderella dream. There was much in it to be reviewed with delight—with smiles and laughter—and very little to regret. She was mildly sorry for those last ten days—for what low people might call her "whirlwind finish." But, after all, it had been nothing very desperate—a few stolen meetings with the amusing Monty Bellingham, a few motor rides with rather frowned-upon people, like the Vernons and the Haddon-Beldings, who, Vittoria shrewdly suspected, led nothing like the murky careers they boasted of. And, after all, the "whirlwind finish" had accomplished the desired object. It had, by sheer force of filling all her waking hours, deadened thought at a time when thought would have hurt her.

It would have hurt her now, would have become intolerable, but that she had learnt how successfully any train of thought can be

kept out of mind by sheer force of will. All people who have suffered great grief or temptation or anxiety know that the mind is a sort of well, whose waters are at the top pure and clear and amply sufficient for daily use through a long period. But they know that at the bottom of the well lurks always the thing they dread, quiet, but alive and unforgotten; and they know that some day the waters will be disturbed or the well run dry, and then the thing at the bottom will rise again and have its way with them.

Vittoria thought that the thing which lay deep down at the bottom of her mind might die if she left it there untouched, un-nourished. Indeed, she was almost sure, since she seemed to have so little difficulty, once the trick was learnt, in keeping her thoughts from it altogether. There was no reason to suppose that she would see Richard Blake for a very long time, and it was quite possible that the long time might become never, since he was abroad in remote lands almost constantly. In any case, she argued, she could not possibly see him until another season, and by that time she would be safely married to Beaumont Temple.

She looked ahead to her probable marriage with, after the first maidenly fears were done, a calm and contented mind. Its only alternative appeared to be an indefinite continuation of her lonely life at Standish, and the months in London had taught her how intolerable that would be. Moreover, she was exceedingly fond of Beau Temple, and she could imagine going through life with him very happily indeed. They would travel a good deal, she thought, and they would spend at least a part of the winter in Italy—then go to London for May and June. She knew that he would be tender with her always, never unreasonable or ill-tempered, and she knew that she ought to be very proud indeed to have won the love of a man who had achieved so much and who was so much in demand wherever he went. She was proud of it, and she thought of him very tenderly as she sat in her garden, or walked across the wooded hills with Mr. Hennessy, and looked forward into that pleasant life which was to come.

She realised, of course, that what she felt for Temple was—as he himself had said to her—no great romantic passion. It was not at all the state of mind of the enamoured ladies in certain of her works of fiction, but she doubted if that somewhat hectic state of mind was to be desired. The works of fiction themselves bore witness that it was

exceedingly unrestful, and that people subject to it were almost always in hot water of some kind: they seemed always to be pursued by malignant fates and to have altogether a terrible time of it. Further, it must be remembered that Vittoria had never been brought in actual contact with a serious love affair—had never seen one in progress, for the mild flirtations and the preliminary flutterings of the *débutante* set in London could by no means come under so important a head. A number of very young men and one or two elder ones (with wives) had spoken to her of love, and had seemed quite feverish and harrowed up about it, but the girl herself had remained untouched—untouched save in one never-to-be-forgotten instance, and that must not be thought of—must be buried from sight—smothered—killed. Certainly the strange agony of that solitary experience was not such as to make her long for a repetition of it in her relation to Beau Temple. Better infinitely the peace and quiet and calm that she knew so well and that so contented her.

"I won't keep dear Beau waiting too long," she said once to Mr. Hennessy, as they sat on a granite-ribbed hill-slope, a mile or two from home. "A little longer—a few days longer, for pride's sake, and then I'll tell him and make him go to town for a pearl ring." She even decided, after some anxious thought, that the ring should have two pearls, not too large and not too small, but just right—one pink one and one bluish white.

She had another pleasant thing to look forward to during these quiet days, and that was the arrival of the Harry Farings at the Lee place, two miles away. She and Beaumont Temple between them laid siege to Pender at luncheon one day on this subject. Pender, all unconscious of threatening peril, had seemed uncommonly human that day, and had even been heard to laugh. Vittoria met Temple's eyes across the table, saw his nod, and made her preliminary announcement. It was the first Fleming had heard of the matter. He looked up at the girl uneasily, scowled, look down again, and at last said that the Farings' movements were no concern of his. He added that he didn't know them, anyhow. But then Beaumont Temple took a hand. He said—

"Rubbish, Pender! You can't for ever go on playing the hibernating bear. You must remember that you've got a young lady to consider nowadays, not a child. These Farings are charming people, who have done



almost as much for Vittoria as Catharine Dudley has done. She has been at their house a hundred times, and on intimate terms. You're enormously in their debt."

Pender could have wept for sheer rage and alarm. He must have heard his castle walls crumbling about him. But the younger man pressed on—

"I, for one, am immensely glad they're coming, both for Vittoria's sake and for my own. As for you, you'll have to do your neighbourly part or write yourself down quite blind to all decency."

For sheer panic the master of Standish was near an explosion just then, but Vittoria interposed to say that there would be no need of anything elaborate in the way of entertaining, since the Farings intended to be very quiet indeed.

"They will have people down for Friday-to-Mondays, I suppose," said she, "but the rest of the time Harry Faring will be at work, and Béatrix and I can just ride about or play golf over Beau's new links.

"Of course," she said, "if you don't mind, I should almost have to have them here occasionally for lunch or dinner, but they won't expect more than that."

So Pender, breathing hard, was allowed to come off better than he had feared; but when he had fled to cover, Beaumont Temple shook his head over the girl, saying—

"That was foolish of you, my dear. We had him bound hand and foot (for, after all, Pender does realise that there's such a thing as the repayment of obligations). Hand and foot we had him bound, and now you've well-nigh released him again. You're too soft-hearted with Pender."

"He looked so frightened and miserable, Beau!" the girl cried. "I couldn't bear it. Poor father!"

"Poor you, I say!" returned the man. "Are we going to ride this afternoon?"

## CHAPTER X.

"FOR THOSE IN PERIL ON THE SEA."

VITTORIA rode over to the Lee place (which, for obvious reasons, was called Cedar Hill) on the day after the Farings' arrival. She found a man to take her horse, and was climbing the steps of the porch, with its high pillars, when Béatrix Faring came round the corner of the house, aproned, gauntleted and smeared with earth, flourishing a large gardener's trowel as she approached.

"Dear child," she said, "this is more than

sweet of you. Lean over and kiss me with great care! Don't touch me anywhere, because I'm the grubbiest being in all England. There's a duck of an old gardener here who has been letting me dig in the flower-beds. He has a big white beard and no moustache. Fancy!" They accomplished the kiss with some difficulty, but complete success, and Mrs. Faring shook herself free of the enormous gauntlets.

"I'm afraid you'll have to help me out of this apron," she said. "I borrowed it from the gardener's wife, and I've not the faintest idea of where it comes apart: somewhere behind, I think. Look about, there's a dear!" Between them they freed her from this garment, and she looked down at her frock with a mild dismay.

"It's quite spoilt, isn't it? Well, I've had fun grubbing, anyhow. I was just like a dog digging out a badger. The dirt flew to both sides of me and over my head, and that ducky gardener hopped up and down on one foot and moaned: 'Saftly—mem! Saftly! Ye'll hae'm a' oot by the rutts,' meaning, I dare say, the plants." She held Vittoria by the shoulders and examined her.

"You've been resting," she said. "You're looking heavenly, my dear. I never saw you look so well. You're pounds fatter, and it becomes you very much. How'd you manage it in ten days' time?"

"Oh, lying in the grass and letting the sun shine on me," said the girl. "Take me in and show me the house; I've never been inside it, you know. No one has lived here since I can remember."

Mrs. Faring laughed and said—

"You'll scream when you see some of the things. They're very comic. But altogether we shall be quite comfortable here, I think. There's heaps of room, and I can hide away a few of the worst monstrosities." She explained, as she went in, that they had sent the servants down three days ahead of them, and so had found the house fresh and clean and habitable when they arrived. Indeed, Vittoria saw that it bore no visible trace of having been unoccupied for many years. It was in no way a remarkably beautiful house, but the rooms were large and well arranged, and of good proportion. The house itself was a hundred years old or more, and the chief decoration and the larger pieces of furniture were simple and massive and good; but the generation of Lees which had inhabited it during the 'seventies and early 'eighties would seem to have been unable to withstand that wave of atrocious taste which



"Just then the men came into the hall below."

swept across the country in their day, for the fine rooms were full of stuffed satin chairs which looked so much like little, fat, absurd gentlemen that one fairly listened to hear them pant and wheeze ; and of sofas apparently constructed of a series of pink sausages ; and of contorted seats made like a letter S, so that two people could sit in them turned opposite ways, but with their faces six inches apart.

"Did you ever see anything more horrible?" cried Béatrix Faring, pointing to these last atrocities. "They must have been made for people who wanted to kiss each other by the hour and be thoroughly comfortable over it. I haven't found any wax fruit under glass globes, but there are two china dogs of an unknown species on that what-not in the corner. Isn't that what you call them—'what-nots'? I learnt the name from the caretaker. And I, with my own hands, have removed three silk scarves which were draped gracefully over the frames of some family portraits. You must see the portraits. There's a Hoppner and two Lawrences, and one that I think is a Romney, but I can't find the signature."

They went through the lower part of the house, and out upon a covered side porch, from which there was a magnificent view across the hills, northwards, and then Mrs. Faring took the girl up to her own sunny and pleasant sitting-room in the story above ; but as they were coming down the stairs again, she said—

"Oh, I forgot to tell you! We brought a guest down with us—a friend of yours. Give you three guesses, and help you out by telling you, to begin on, that it's a man!"

"Heavens! how should I know?" said Vittoria. "It might be any one of fifty. Only *don't* tell me that it is Mr. Bellingham, because, if it is, I shall hide. I had enough of him in London." The name of Richard Blake never for an instant occurred to her, because she had no reason to connect him with the Farings. She did not even know that they were friends.

"It's not Monty Bellingham," said the elder woman. "Guess again! Well, I shan't tell you. I shall let it be a complete surprise, and watch your faces, when you meet, for a guilty blush." She said that in a light tone, but she meant it literally. She was very curious to find out how much, if at all, the girl would be affected by learning that Blake had followed her to her stronghold. She had thought about the affair a good deal during the past few days. Richard

Blake had told her that there was no reason whatever for believing that Miss Fleming regarded him as anything but a casual acquaintance, and a rather rude one at that, but the speech had not quite agreed with certain other half admissions of his, nor at all with his manner. So she had taken the liberty of disbelieving it, and had made up her mind that there was a good deal more on Vittoria's side than the man would confess. She remembered the girl's feverish activity and recklessness during the last fortnight in town, and, being a woman, understood it in the light of what she partly knew, partly guessed. Altogether, she had arrived at a conclusion which was oddly close to the truth, but fell somewhat short of it. It must, however, be borne in mind that she knew nothing of Beaumont Temple's arrival in the lists.

"It's not Monty Bellingham," she said again. "It's a real man, and one I'm very fond of myself ; but if I were threatened with death or serious bodily injury, I should probably give way and confess that his reasons for coming here had more to do with Miss Vittoria Fleming than with me—and I call it rather noble of me to tell you."

"Well, I give it up," the girl said. "I give it up. I shan't even try to guess. I only hope he's one of the nice ones. Where have you concealed him? And, where by the way, is Mr. Faring?"

The elder woman explained that her husband and guest were out at the stables, but broke off to listen, and said—

"I think they're coming. I think I hear them. Have you your blush ready?"

Vittoria heard footsteps on the porch below—the big front door was open—and Harry Faring's voice saying something about the rotten road between Mickleford and Upton. Then two men came into the doorway and stood there a moment before entering.

Her hand dropped away from Mrs. Faring's shoulder as if the strength had gone out of it, and she gave a single exclamation—just a little "Oh!"—in a low tone, but Béatrix Faring thought that one quiet sound told more than any complete sentence, or even any long explanation that she had ever heard. It is odd, but she thought instantly of the story that used to be told of a certain famous tragedian, who is now dead—that he could make people weep bitterly by the recital of the cardinal numbers from one to twenty. She looked into Vittoria's face with some anxiety, and the anticipated blush

had not come there, but an even pallor instead, and she put up one arm behind the girl's shoulders, wondering if she might be about to faint.

Just then the men came into the hall below and glanced up to where the two were standing midway of the stairs. Harry Faring gave a shout of welcome, ran part of the way up to where they were, and Vittoria advanced to meet him. They went on down to the foot of the stairs, and Faring asked—

"You've met Richard Blake, haven't you?" His wife tried to break in and spare the girl, but Vittoria said quite easily—

"Oh, yes, indeed. I should think I had! Mr. Blake saved my silly neck once when I had fallen off a horse and was being dragged. I've never had a chance to thank him properly." She put out her hand to the younger man, and Blake took it for an instant, but Mrs. Faring saw that the girl kept her eyes down, and, as soon as Blake had released her hand, turned a little away from him, though he was stumbling through some rather incoherent disclaimer of having rendered any very useful service. Mrs. Faring interposed quickly—

"Well, I call saving anybody's life doing them a rather useful service, you know." And Vittoria laughed and said—

"Yes, my neck is useful to me, in spite of Mr. Blake's depreciation of it." She drew Harry Faring aside with some remark about the dreadful stuffed furniture, and they moved away into one of the rooms beyond.

Béatrix Faring waited until they were gone, and then touched Richard Blake upon the arm. He had been staring after the other two, and turned back to her with a start.

She looked into his face very seriously.

"You'll have to be careful," she said. "I was idiotic enough not to warn her that you were here. I merely told her that we had a guest, and she was wondering who it could be, when you came into the door. She turned quite white. You'll have to be careful. I imagine she resents your avoiding her. Why didn't you tell me you had saved her life? Men are such—— Oh, I could slap you! You deserve to lose her, and you'll do it, too, if you don't begin to behave like a sane human being. She frightened me cold when she went white like that. You can't have told me half the truth on that day in town."

"I told you all I knew," he protested. "You're imagining things now. What do you want me to do?"

"Be a little bit human!" cried the exasperated lady. "You look and act like a graven image—like a soldier on parade—and a recruit at that. See if you can't talk and make motions! Come along!"

They pursued the other two and caught them up on the north porch, where they had gone, as Harry Faring put it, to see if the view was still there. Blake did his desperate utmost to "talk and make motions," as he had been bidden, but all the many devils of perversity seemed to have him in their grip, and he was like a man frozen. It was his instinct, as it is the instinct of most men, to take a firm hold upon himself in moments of great strain, and he did not realise how complete a thing that hold was. As at the dinner-party of their second meeting, he was cold and silent, and had the air of being extremely bored. Béatrix Faring saw and understood, and in her despair could have shaken the man. She made an excuse for drawing her husband back into the house, and avoided Vittoria's wrathful eye as she went; but, when in five minutes they returned, the two were talking stiffly about some of their friends in London, and in each of the girl's cheeks a little red spot was burning.

In justice to the man, awkward and self-conscious though he was, it must be conceded that during this brief interval he had made an heroic effort to lay aside his armour, to hark back to the oddly intimate footing upon which the first and the last of their meetings had taken place; but the girl was thoroughly angry, and met him with an icy indifference which was impregnable.

It is a favourite and untiring reproach on the part of critics, both literary and dramatic, that the complications of many romances and plays hang upon lovers' quarrels, misunderstandings due to the exaggerated and tragic pride of young people who would rather suffer than explain. The critical gentlemen are very fond of scoffing at this so-called artificial means of prolonging an agony, and they have certain set phrases for the expression of their scorn, which they can write with their backs turned and their eyes closed (perhaps even with their hands tied). Yet these same beings know perfectly well that in real life it is just this prideful silence, at a moment when half-a-dozen frank words would explain everything, which is responsible for half the bitter misunderstandings, half the broken hearts, in this perverse and stubborn world. There has never been any satisfactory explanation of

why most people should prefer their dignity to their happiness ; but people are so, and if the critical gentlemen do not like it in works of fiction, at least they have to put up with it in real life—and that is some satisfaction to the present scribe.

The things which afterwards came to pass in the history of Vittoria Fleming and of Richard Blake, and of certain other people, were not altogether dependent upon the absurd attitude of these two towards each other on the occasion of their fourth meeting, but the meeting had, for all that, at least one direct and important and far-reaching consequence, and so this history does depend somewhat upon it.

Vittoria remained not more than an hour at Cedar Hill, and then, upon some plausible pretext, got away. When her horse was led round, Richard Blake put her up, and, while performing the feat, asked permission to call at Standish. There was no way of refusing, short of absolute rudeness, and she said rather ungraciously that she would be glad to see him there. But she made a mental note to avoid the meeting by all possible means. Then she waved her crop to the three on the porch, and rode away.

She began to feel the reaction from the hour's strain as soon as ever her back was turned, and as the horse picked its way at an easy trot down the long slope towards the open gates, she was aware that her heart was pounding, and, with a sudden access of rage, she was aware that she wanted to cry. She beat the clenched fist of her free right hand fiercely upon her knee, winked hard a few times, and at least the disgrace of tears was put behind her. She cried aloud—

"Why did he come here? Why?" And her horse pricked up its ears and shook its head once or twice, as if it felt unable to venture an opinion.

"He has spoilt everything!" she said, but not aloud this time. And, indeed, she seemed to be right. The pleasant, easy intercourse which she had hoped for, between the three houses, bade fair to be completely wrecked by Blake's unexplained presence. She could not imagine why he had come. Surely it could not have been, as Béatrix Faring had laughingly intimated, because Cedar Hill was near to Standish, because he had had the air of a man bored to extinction in her presence. To be sure, he had made one attempt, but obviously at the expense of great effort, to be a little more polite, but doubtless that had come from a sort of belated sense of duty to his hostess's guest. Certainly it was

not to be near Vittoria Fleming that he had come. Why come at all, then, since there were none of the ordinary amusements to be had near Cedar Hill? She shook her head, and gave up wondering, but she could not dismiss the man so easily as that. He meant, or had meant, too much to her. She saw his face, a little pale and drawn into the hard, stern lines which his fierce effort at control had set upon it, and she saw his eyes, and quite suddenly there came back to her, like a remembered scent, or a vivid, never-forgotten picture, the sensation of being lifted and carried in his arms and laid down upon the turf by the roadside. Involuntarily she closed her eyes, opened them again, and looked up into Blake's face, that was bent above her. It was still drawn into those hard, stern lines, but they were lines of anxiety and fear for her, and his eyes glowed and his breath came short and fast.

Vittoria covered her eyes with her hand and shivered a little. She was thoroughly frightened. Was all this to be gone over again? Was that new-found control of hers, that power to forget, to put out of mind, was it to be made helpless all in an hour because Richard Blake was once more near at hand?

"What shall I do?" she cried once more aloud. "I don't know what to do." This thing was stronger than she, and she knew it. In an instant it had swept her feeble defences away, as a resistless surge sweeps over and beats down an ill-made dyke. Without some sure refuge she was lost now, indeed!

But there was a refuge true and tried and sure—a harbour, she said to herself, safe from all the storms that blow. Only she did not know yet what storms there are on these uncertain seas. She had come to a fork in the road, and one branch led home to Standish, and the other east by south, towards Beaumont Temple's stronghold. She turned her horse into the second branch and quickened its pace to a gallop.

The road was a narrow, winding road, with high banks at either side, and ragged hedgerows of hawthorn and brier atop the banks. Here and there dwarf oaks leant crooked branches down from above, and sometimes Vittoria had to bend her head and lean forward in the saddle to avoid them. The horse settled down to its stretching gallop with a little snort of pleasure, for it was fresh and needed the exercise.

So she fled down through the hollow lane, and birds rose chattering before her, and

once or twice a hare started up almost from under the horse's hoofs. She made short work of the three miles, and, almost before Vittoria realised it, she was mounting the long rise of Lone Tree Hill.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE PORT IN THE STORM.

TEMPLE himself came to meet her, for he had seen her approaching, and had called a stable boy to take her horse. He cried—

"My dear child, this is more than good of you! This is angelic. A gift from Heaven. Here was I lounging crossly about the place, smoking my pipe, and wishing that something nice would turn up. What good deed have I done that I should have my wish gratified in this fashion?"

He led her up to the deep side verandah which he had added to his old house, and which was, in reality, a sort of summer room, enclosed by wire screens and set about with comfortable cane chairs and with tables whereon lay newspapers and magazines. He lived here a great deal in the warm season, for the place had the breeze from three sides, and sometimes he locked the door which led into the house, and did his work here.

He said: "Like the well-known father, I saw you, while you were yet afar off, and ran to meet you. The fatted calf is even now being killed, and will presently appear in long glasses with ice chinking about in it. Meanwhile, sit down and be as patient as you can." He pulled forward a cane deck-chair, with cushions tied upon it, but Vittoria would not sit down. She said—

"No. Let me stand for a while. I came to tell you something." She was a little pale, and her manner was strained and unnatural. The man's heart sank within him, but he managed a smile that was not too unlike his kindly usual smile, and he said—

"Out with it, then! Let's have it over!" She said—

"You—a few days ago, Beau, you asked me to marry you. And I asked for time to think it over."

"Yes," said Beaumont Temple under his breath. "Yes. I have hardly forgotten." His face had turned very grave.

"Well," said she, "I have. If you still want me, Beau, I will marry you. I want to marry you. That's all."

Temple gave a sudden cry of joy, and the blood rushed to his face so that it was, for

an instant, crimson. Still, he held back. He demanded—

"Freely, child? You come to me freely—of your own will? Pender hasn't been at you?"

"Father has had nothing to do with it," she said. "I come of my own will. Do you want me?"

He did not say whether he wanted her or not, but his eyes were shining as she had never before seen them shine. He took a swift step towards her, his arms held out, and Vittoria never knew that she shrank a little back from him. He came another step forward, but abruptly halted and said—

"Hang that gardener! Must he cut my grass at this historic moment?" The sound of a mowing machine came to Vittoria's ears, and she gave a little hysterical laugh. She was conscious of a faint and vague sense of relief, but the moment was too full of strain for analysis.

"What are the greatest and most wonderful words," said Beau Temple, "in which gratitude and joy and triumph can be expressed? I don't know them. I seem to be tongue-tied. It is my trade to string words together, but they fail me now, when I have sorest need of them. Oh, child, you have filled me too full. I cannot speak.

"I shall try to make you happy," he said. "That seems to be all I can say." And Vittoria nodded gravely. She felt rather solemn and a little breathless, for the die was cast now, but she also felt safe—and that was what she wanted.

"I know you will do that, Beau," said she. "I feel safe with you—so perfectly safe!"

Even through the storm of his emotion the man was conscious of the rather odd choice of words and of the emphasis with which they were spoken. But he, too, was beyond analysis just then, swallowed up in contentment.

The fatted calf was brought in tall glasses—ginger ale with a lemon skin coiled serpent-like in it—and Vittoria sat down in the cane arm-chair and took her glass into both hands, making little purring noises over it like a cat with a saucer of milk. She had a passion for this beverage, and Temple never forgot to provide it on her rare visits.

"I feel very cosy and domestic already, Beau," she said. And the man beamed over her with such an air of absurd proprietorship that she broke into a fit of laughter and found it hard to stop. Temple saw the strain under which she was labouring,



but it seemed to him not unnatural. She had done a brave thing to come there alone with her offer, and he could have gone down on his knees to her for it. With the very laudable and unselfish aim of sparing the girl by turning the conversation to less personal things, he asked if the Farings had arrived at Cedar Hill, and she said—

“Oh, yes, they arrived yesterday. I’ve just come from there. I rode over to say a word of welcome.”

He asked if they had brought down any guests, and, after a moment, Vittoria said—

“One—a man I met in London. Mr. Blake.”

But at that name Temple, who had been standing at a little distance, turned upon her sharply with an exclamation.

“What? What was that?”

She said the name again, but with his eyes upon her it was difficult, and she looked down into the glass that she held between her hands.

“Mr. Blake—Richard Blake. I think I remember his saying—that he knew you.” Temple turned away again in silence, and took a turn up and down the porch with his hands clasped behind him. Once the girl looked up for an instant, and it seemed to her that his face betrayed astonishment and not a little concern. She wondered, but not greatly, for she was struggling hard for self-control.

After a brief silence the man halted before her and asked—

“Do you know this Mr.—Blake very well?” And Vittoria said—

“No, not very well.” But upon that she took a quick breath and said hurriedly—

“Beau, I shall—want you to help me a little. This Mr.—Richard Blake—I’m sorry he has come here, and I don’t want to have to see any more of him than can be helped. It sounds very ungrateful, because Mr. Blake saved my life once when I had fallen from my horse in the Park and was being dragged. He happened to be near and saved me. But—in spite of that—I can’t explain just now. Perhaps he will go back to town soon, anyhow. Then it will be all right. Meanwhile—”

“Meanwhile,” Temple interrupted, “you want to avoid him. Naturally! We’ll manage it somehow.” He took up his walk once more, back and forth across the broad porch, and he was frowning. Once or twice he spoke to himself, and Vittoria heard him say that something was “in-

credible,” but what it was he did not explain. He seemed oddly disturbed.

There came from somewhere out of sight beyond the house the sound of a voice of curiously beautiful timbre, and then a little phrase of French song.

“Who is that?” asked Vittoria. “What a lovely voice! Who is that singing?” And Temple again swung about with an explanation, but this time of pleasure. He said—

“Ah! I forgot to tell you. I, too, have a guest. He came yesterday, and in a manner very characteristic of him—out of the blue sky, as it were, with only a few hours’ warning. You have heard me speak of Raoul de Coucy, I’m sure. I knew him very well a long time ago in France, and whenever I go there nowadays, I spend a fortnight with him. What has brought him to England I cannot imagine, but I am very grateful to whatever it may be, for I think there is no man living of whom I am fonder.”

“De Coucy?” said Vittoria. “That is rather a tremendous name, isn’t it? Or at least used to be, long ago. Only the other day I came upon a little book of Violet-le-Duc’s about the chateau.”

“You must tell Raoul that,” said Temple. “He’ll be pleased, because he is a perfectly authentic De Coucy, and the last of the name, though, of course, the name has not been very important since—when was it?—the early fifteenth century. Still, as you say, it was tremendous once. They stood on an equality with kings. D’you know their motto? ‘*Roi ne suys, ne prince, ne duc, ne comte aussi. Je suys le sire de Coucy.*’ How’s that for feudal arrogance?” He went to the end of the porch and called his friend’s name.

“Raoul! Raoul! *Viens ici, je te prie!*” The beautiful voice answered him from a distance, and he turned back. He said—

“I must warn you that De Coucy is entirely blind, but he’s very clever in getting about, and you’d hardly suspect his infirmity if you weren’t told of it.”

A grey-haired man came round the corner of the house, walking slowly over the grass and twirling a little cane in his hand. He was attended by a servant, who moved close beside him and a step behind. The man carried a Pauama hat in his left hand, for the weather had been for some weeks unseasonably warm, and the day was sultry. He was a little more exquisitely dressed than any Anglo-Saxon man would have cared to

be, not in the elder and formal French fashion, but in the style of the modern Parisian *élégant*. He wore the serge lounge suit of informality, but the jacket fitted his slender waist like a woman's jacket, and was of a deep violet hue. The pale tones of shirt and cravat and out-peeping *pochette* bespoke the genius of the well-known M. Charvet, of the Rue de la Paix, and his boots (with violet tops !) were of that peculiar flesh-coloured tan which is never seen outside of Latin countries, and which seems to have been made out of the skin of a very pale mulatto.

The grey-haired man turned his face towards the screened porch as he rounded the corner, and called—

"*Me voici, mon vieux ! Me voici !*" And it seemed to Vittoria that she had never heard a speaking voice, whether of man or of woman, that was so extraordinarily musical in timbre. It was as if it sang in saying the most casual words. The servant moved forward past his master and held open the door into the porch. Vittoria saw that M. de Coucy's little twirling stick just touched the lowest of the steps, as it were, by accident, and then he came up them and into the porch without the slightest groping or hesitation.

Beaumont Temple went to meet his friend and took him by the arm. He said—

"I am to have the pleasure and the rather extraordinary privilege of introducing two great houses—Corner and Coucy. Raoul, I have the honour to present you to Donna Vittoria Fleming, whose grandfather was the head of the Cornaro." The Frenchman smiled and extended his hand a little way. Vittoria saw that his face was almost as beautiful as his voice. It was lean, and bore the marks of age, for the man was nearly sixty, but the features were of the most exquisite delicacy and the skin was as fine in texture as any woman's. He wore a little moustache with the ends waxed and turned upwards, and his grey hair was cut *en brosse*, but it was soft hair and lay back in short waves instead of bristling fiercely erect, as does the hair of so many Frenchmen.

Vittoria put her hand in his, and he bent over and kissed it. He said, using the old ceremonious title, as if the girl were, perhaps, her great-grandmother—

"Illustrious madonna, I precipitate myself at your feet, and count it a very happy privilege."

"This is historic," said Beaumont Temple, laughing. "I feel a sense of extreme in-

adequacy to the occasion. There should have been red carpet and photographers. I am humiliated at my lack of foresight."

A servant approached just then to tell him that he was wanted at the telephone for a long-distance message, and he turned to go into the house. But he said over his shoulder—

"Donna Vittoria knows all about your forbears, Raoul. She has been reading Violet-le-Duc." So he left the two together. The telephone message proved to be very bothersome, for it was from London, and the communication, as so often happens with long-distance calls, was interrupted two or three times, and he had to wait for it to be made again. So in all he was detained for ten or fifteen minutes, and put badly out of temper.

He returned to his guests full of apologies, but they seemed to be talking together rather gravely and with every appearance of mutual interest. They had changed from English, which De Coucy used well enough, but with some stiffness, to French, which Vittoria spoke very well indeed, having had French nurses and governesses. But as he rejoined them, the girl rose and said that she must be going home, for it was late. So he had her horse brought round and put her up himself. They were out of earshot from the screened porch, and he asked—

"I hope you and De Coucy got on well ? He is rather a wonderful man, when one comes to know him. I should like you two to like each other." Vittoria seemed to give the matter a moment's sober consideration, but after that she said—

"I think we shall. I liked him, and I hope he liked me. He is very wise."

Temple wondered how she had had an opportunity to find that out in fifteen minutes at the most ; but there was no time to discuss it now, and he turned to more intimate matters, demanding to know when he was to see her next.

"I would ride over to Standish this evening," said he, "but that Raoul wants to talk over some affair of his with me. Shall it be to-morrow ?"

She said : "Yes, to-morrow. Perhaps, if I'm riding to-morrow afternoon, I'll call on you again. In any case, come in the evening." Then she gave him her hand for a moment that prolonged itself somewhat beyond the necessities, and so rode away down the hill.

But when she had gone, Temple went back into the screened porch, and, since the

horse and its rider were still in sight, he stood a little while looking after them. The Frenchman said behind him—

"That is a very lovely and charming young lady. And I think she is also very beautiful. Am I not right? I wonder——" He made an odd and pathetic gesture. He raised one hand and covered his eyes with it, as people do when they wish to shut out all vision for an effort of memory. He said—

"She reminds me very much indeed, though in an inexplicable fashion, of another lovely lady whom I seem to have known long ago, but my memory fails me just now. Later on, when I am no longer thinking of it, the lady's name and the circumstances will return to me. I remember only that she was very sweet and very charming, and that she was unhappy. This *jeune fille* also is unhappy. Why? Why is she unhappy?"

Temple swung about with an exclamation of amused astonishment.

"Unhappy!" he cried. "Well, I trust she's not that. She——" He hesitated a moment, and a bit of colour came into his cheeks. "She may have seemed a little—distracted to-day—that would be natural in view of certain circumstances—a little moved out of her usual calm, perhaps. But unhappy? Oh, no!"

"She is unhappy," said the Frenchman, in a tone of unstirred conviction. "I, who have no eyes to see, have other senses that are very keen. What is making that young lady unhappy?" Temple drew a long breath, for the other man's words chilled him—the words and his own confidence in De Coucy's almost uncanny intuition. The blind man was seldom wrong. Unbidden, the thought of Richard Blake came before him, and he remembered Vittoria's words, remembered that she had explained nothing—had spoken only, and very briefly, of her desire to see as little of the other man as she could.

Richard Blake! That name meant a good deal to Temple, for he knew certain things that the girl did not know. So Vittoria had been meeting Richard Blake in London, and now that young man would seem to have followed her into the country. He reflected that it was he himself who had persuaded Pender Fleming to send his daughter to London, and here was the outcome of it! She had found Richard Blake there. He, Beaumont Temple, who loved her, had brought that about.

It seemed to him well-nigh uncanny. It seemed to him that there must be something

preordained, fatal, in it all, and a sudden shiver wrung him despite the warm sunshine in which he stood.

Richard Blake!

Over the surface of his deeper concern came the question: "Why does she not wish to see the man? Is she afraid, or does she dislike him?" He wondered a little about that, but gave up wondering, because he could not possibly know unless Vittoria chose to tell him.

A creaking movement of De Coucy's chair recalled his attention, and he started, as one does in waking from a reverie. He said—

"I beg your pardon, Raoul! My thoughts wandered. What was it you asked?"

"I asked," said the Frenchman, "what it was that is making Mademoiselle Fleming unhappy? But perhaps you cannot tell."

"No," said Beaumont Temple in a low voice. "No, my friend, I cannot tell. I didn't know. It is very bitter to me to think that she may be unhappy, for her happiness means a great deal to me. I hope to marry Miss Fleming, Raoul."

The blind Frenchman sprang to his feet, his hands outstretched before him, his face full of tenderness and of pain.

"Ah, *mon vieux! mon vieux!*" he cried. "Forgive me. I didn't know. And I didn't mean what I said. *Mon cher ami*, I am an imbecile!"

Temple regarded him with a wry smile.

"With all my heart I hope so, Raoul," said he.

## CHAPTER XII.

### DONNA BIANCA.

VITTORIA rode slowly home under the noon-day sun. It was hot and still, but she was not uncomfortable. She was unaware of external things. A little ragged, admiring boy from one of the neighbouring farms saluted her, sitting by the roadside, with a "Mornin', ma'am!" but she did not hear him. A waggon clattered by, raising a cloud of dust, in which her horse tossed its head and sneezed, but Vittoria was unconscious of discomfort. Her attention was within.

Arrived at Standish she found that it was almost luncheon-time, and so after a very hasty toilet went down to the table without changing out of her riding-skirt. Greatly to her relief, Pender Fleming did not appear. He often lunched alone in the room where he had spent most of his waking hours



"Vittoria . . . looked into the beautiful face of the mother who had come to her."

for the past twenty years, and on such occasions he merely sent word that he would not be at the table, without giving any reason for it. Vittoria sometimes wondered what the reason might be, but Pender was not the sort of man of whom one asks unnecessary questions, and, besides, she did not much care. Her father's presence at the table was so silent and funereal a presence that, without being quite aware of it, she was glad when he stayed away.

The state of terror and excitement in which she had rushed from Cedar Hill, to throw herself, as it were, at Beau Temple's head, was gone from her entirely, and her mind was altogether occupied with what she had done, and the definite and irrevocable step she had taken. She was not sorry for her action, though she wished it could have been managed in some less headlong fashion. She was glad of it. But few people take a step which is to decide the whole future course of their lives without finding themselves beset by some qualms—fears—doubts—some rather terrifying sense of the finality of what they have done. Vittoria felt a curious and, in its intensity, unprecedented sense of loneliness. It seemed to her that she was quite pathetically alone, that she had no one to go to for counsel or sympathy at this time, when, of all times, she needed a shoulder to weep upon, though there was nothing to weep for. She was by nature, as well as by force of circumstances, a very self-reliant young person; but she found herself suddenly quite limp and miserable, and she thought she would like to cry, and she was conscious of a bitterly passionate longing for her mother. More than ever before in her life, more than all the other times put together, she wanted a mother to cling to.

She finished the uncheerful, solitary meal, and afterwards took a book, the "Pragmatism" of Professor William James, out upon the shaded terrace, where she had a comfortable deck-chair. She remained there until late afternoon, then made her slow way up towards her own chamber; but on the stairs the housekeeper, a stout, red-cheeked woman of middle age, halted her with a question. Plumbers were at work in the house, it appeared, and in tracing the course of some leaking water-pipes along the attic floor, found themselves halted by a small store-room, to which the housekeeper found she had no key.

"The key must have been lost some way, Miss Vittory," she apologised. "I can't think how, and I don't like to bother the

master to find out if he has one. Do you think we might take the door off its hinges? The room's of no importance. I just remember that there's trunks and boxes and such in it—from away back. The men could put the door back in good order once they've found out about the pipes."

Vittoria nodded indifferently, saying—

"Oh, yes, I dare say. It can do no harm, I should think. I'll go up with you, if you like." She was pathetically glad of the chance to give her mind to any such trifle.

"Ah, now, that'd be real kind of you, miss," the housekeeper said. "It takes the blame of it off my shoulders, like. We shan't be long."

They found the working men in the dim attic at bay before the locked door. Vittoria gave them permission to go on, and they very soon had the door off its hinges and set aside. The room within was very dusty, for no one had been there in years, and it smelt of long confinement and of the dust and of dry decay. At one end were a number of pieces of furniture—bedroom furniture, it seemed—half concealed under covers of linen, and about the floor stood hampers of an old design, and packing-cases, and ornamental jars of Chinese porcelain and various other decorative ornaments. It was as if an entire room—a bedroom very luxuriously fitted—had been stripped long ago and its contents locked up here.

Vittoria glanced about her with a faint and absent surprise. The significance of these things did not reach her dulled sensibilities at all. But the housekeeper looked at her swiftly, and away again, pursing up her broad lips in a grotesque and soundless whistle. The woman had not been above ten years in that house, but she must have heard servants' and neighbourhood gossip, and she must at this moment have had her surmises.

A number of large paintings in tarnished frames were stacked at one side of the room, face to wall, and one of the workmen, burrowing about his business, dislodged this stack so that the outermost canvas fell over upon its back on the floor. Vittoria, in a mood of idle curiosity, stepped forward to see what the painting might be, but, when she saw it, gave a sudden low cry of sheer amazement and stood staring. The red-cheeked housekeeper moved up behind her mistress's shoulder, looked, and also cried out. The picture on the floor appeared to be a life-sized portrait, very finely rendered, of Miss Vittoria Fleming. It

might have been painted yesterday or the week before, or the month, but not prior to the girl's advent in London, and her discovery of the infinite possibilities in the matter of garments and hairdressing.

"Whoever can it be, miss?" the red-cheeked housekeeper cried at last, amazement and something like fear in her protruded eyes. "Heaven save us, miss! Whoever can it be?"

"It is my mother," said the girl without emotion—"my mother, who died nearly twenty years ago. . . . Ask one of these men, please, to carry it down to my room." The woman turned and stared at her fearsomely.

"But the master, miss!" she said, whispering, as if Pender Fleming might lurk behind hamper or packing-box.

"What will he say, miss?" she protested. Vittoria's eyebrows went up a very little.

"Please ask two of these men to carry the portrait down to my room!" she said again, and the woman turned and gave the order.

Below, in her great square chamber that looked to west and south, she locked the door, and, slightly dampening a towel, wiped the painted canvas free of the dust of twenty years. The working men, under her direction, had set the portrait across the arms of a huge chair, so that it leant securely against the chair's back. It was near the westward windows, and the low, late sun shone mildly in upon it, touching the colours with life and fire.

The woman in the picture sat upon a carved oak settle, leaning forward out of her tarnished frame, one very perfect arm laid along the back of the settle, the other across her knees. She was dressed in a satin evening gown of yellowish ivory tones, and there was nothing in the costume to indicate the fashion of any particular period. It was very plain, with long sweeping lines that clung to or followed the woman's figure. Also her hair was not done in the fashion of her day, but in a style oddly similar to that which Catharine Dudley's coiffeur had decided upon for Vittoria Fleming, and which lent to that maiden a part of her striking resemblance to the celebrated operatic lady.

Beyond this, the likeness between Donna Bianca Fleming, who sat in her gilded frame, and Donna Vittoria, her daughter, who knelt upon the floor before it, was amazing. The girl might have been looking into a mirror.

In the year 'eighty-four the world lost a great genius when a certain young Polish painter was killed in a railway accident between Paris and Versailles. His name is

forgotten now, for, in quantity, the sum of his work was small, but for the two or three years before his death he was probably the most conspicuous figure living in the field of portraiture. Unlike most of his contemporaries, he painted very boldly, with an effect of *bravura* such as one may see in Franz Hals long before, and in Mr. John Sargent at the present day. But the Pole did more. It used to be said of him, as of Herr Lenbach, that he reduced his conception of a subject to a single idea—to a single expressive word, as it were—and so painted a mantle of flesh and drapery round this conception. Certainly the portraits which he left behind him seem to bear out the tale, and among them none bears it out more astonishingly than the last portrait which came from his brush.

In Bianca Fleming the Pole seems to have seen one thing above all things, and that thing spoke, after twenty years, from the painted canvas with a flamelike vividness which was poignant beyond words—a passionate prayer for life and love and happiness. In the mother the Pole saw and realised and painted it; in the daughter Richard Blake saw it with his first glance, and feared for it and thrilled to it—Bianca Cornaro's heritage to her child.

Vittoria, kneeling on the floor close beside the big arm-chair, looked into the beautiful face of the mother who had come to her, as it were, by a miracle, and a sort of silent speech seemed to pass between the two—speech more intimate than any spoken words could possibly be. And after a little while the girl laid her arms out upon the seat of the chair, bent her head over them, and began to weep, but not for grief—the tears that come to women and to children in time of stress, bringing blessed relief and comfort and peace. For tears are much more literally a safety valve than most people know.

But when she had done with her pleasant and comfortable weeping—had sobbed away, as it were, all strain and nervous excitement, Vittoria raised her head once more to meet her mother's eyes. She was amazed beyond all expression at the astonishing resemblance between Donna Bianca and herself, for that was something she had not been prepared for, and she was touched by it, too. It seemed to create at once a sort of intimacy between them. She realised that if her mother had proved to be an altogether different type of woman, however lovely, she could not have felt for her the immediate



sense of sympathy and kinship with which her heart was now overflowing. Her joy had still the keen edge of pain, because now, more than ever before, she realised what the two might have been to each other if Donna Bianca had lived, but she was too glad to regret very much—too overcome by gratitude at the miracle which had befallen her.

She sat back upon her heels and looked a long time with a soft and tender gravity into the eyes of the woman in the portrait. A fanciful conviction began to grow in her that her mother was trying to speak. She leant forward so eagerly from her tarnished frame, her eyes were so wistful, her red lips parted in the very beginning of speech.

It was not at all as absurd as it sounds, for almost anyone may become seized by that eerie sensation if he stands a long time before a well-rendered portrait whose subject is not at rest, but in a pose of animation. Vittoria, without knowing it, was slowly hypnotising herself by one of the most commonplace methods, and, as she knelt there, looking into her mother's eyes, she grew very still, until she was almost rigid, her gaze became more and more fixed and immovable, and her face took on an eager, receptive expression—the expression of one who listens very intently, until it was drawn in lines that were almost painful. It seemed to her, in so far as she was capable of thought, that if she waited and waited and listened and was still, those eager, parted lips must at last speak to her—tell her what it was they so longed to tell—the secret behind her mother's shadowy, wistful eyes. And once her own lips parted for a brief sound of whispered speech. She said—

"Oh, what is it? What is it you want to say to me?" So they sat there together, these two women who were so astonishingly alike, and the strange semblance of a silent speech passed between them while the sunlight died away, and the sunset colours paled from the west, and twilight stole into the room. Once a servant knocked at the door, asking if her mistress would come down to dinner, but Vittoria did not answer. It is doubtful if she even heard.

And twilight deepened to dusk and imperceptibly the night came on. Then, when it was dark and eyes could no longer see, Bianca Fleming left her tarnished frame and crept closer to the daughter who knelt waiting, closer in the enveloping darkness, a warm and fragrant presence, a very human woman, whose soul, as Vittoria knew afterwards, had cried out for love and under-

standing, and who, in the end, had had the courage to take love to her heart in the face of a contemptuous world.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### IN THE WALLED GARDEN.

EARLY on the next morning Vittoria, accompanied by the faithful and sympathetic Mr. Hennessy, went for a walk. She had had rather a bad night, obsessed by dreams beautiful and thrilling and cruelly sweet. That does not sound like a very bad night, but the dreams were forbidden dreams, and the dim remembrance of them remained to haunt and frighten her after sleep was done. She had, moreover, two or three matters to think of, and it was her habit to save up such things—like a dog with a bone—until she could take them out into the open solitude and there go over them carefully. Most women do that.

There was first, of course, the matter of Richard Blake, and of what was to be done about him if he chose to remain in the neighbourhood. And, secondly, there was the matter of that curious little revulsion of feeling, the instinctive shrinking from Beau Temple on the day before, when she thought he was going to take her in his arms and kiss her. She had been unaware at the time that the feeling had expressed itself in action, but afterwards, when she thought of it, she wondered if she had not really drawn away from him—as, indeed, she had—for the feeling had been quite strong enough for that. It puzzled and a little alarmed her. She had never shrunk from him before, not even when, in imagination, she had looked forward to their marriage, and she wondered why that sudden and strong sense of repulsion should have swept and mastered her. Also she wished to reflect at leisure upon Temple's friend, the blind Frenchman with the beautiful face and the singing voice. She thought that she had never met or seen anyone in the least like him, and the man interested her very much. He would have interested her for his own peculiar qualities, the old-fashioned courtesy, and the colour of romance and the sound sweetness of him—quite apart from the oddly intimate conversation into which the two had fallen during Temple's absence in the house; but the conversation was so uncommon that it was unforgettable. It is not usual for strangers—an old man and a young girl—to begin to discuss the meaning of life within ten minutes of their

introduction. Vittoria had tried to remember how it was, by what chance word, the talk had fallen upon such lines, but that had gone from her. She remembered only what they had said afterwards, how she had quoted a phrase from a book, recently read, to the effect that life at its best is but a series of compromises. And she remembered how De Coucy had cried out upon that—

“Ah, no, mademoiselle! Not for you, who are young, and have life before you! We old ones have lost all that we had through that. Never compromise, mademoiselle! Never compromise! That sort of wisdom is cowardice. Be brave! Take your life into your hands and go forward. Do not make compromises!”

It was strange advice for an old man who had lived long in the world to give to a young girl whose life, as he said, was all before her, but the blind Frenchman gave it very seriously and without hesitation. And it remained in the girl's mind word for word, and troubled her a little.

So she went out upon the hills alone with the little Irish terrier, taking these three matters with her to reflect upon; but, important to her as they were, she found it extraordinarily difficult to focus her mind upon them. She found herself in a state of mental apathy—not the apathy of fatigue, but of pleasant and lazy inaction. It was a very beautiful morning, sunny and bright, but cooled by a little, gentle west wind. Vittoria stood still on the hill-slopes and filled her lungs with that sweet and aromatic air, pungent with the breath of pine. She stretched out her strong young arms to the splendour of the perfect day, and was conscious of a state of extravagant bodily well-being. She had no desire to walk any farther, and anything like mental effort was profoundly distasteful even to contemplate. If she had been a cat, she would have found a very comfortable place in the grass, and she would have lain down there, tucked her forepaws under, and purred. Not being a cat, she turned about and began to walk slowly homewards, and she dismissed from mind the three important matters upon which she had come out to reflect, as easily and as completely as if they had been the three most trivial things in the world.

She seems to have summed up her mood rather neatly in a single observation which, as they sauntered along towards Standish, she made to Mr. Hennessy. She said—

“I wish I were a man and could smoke a pipe!”

When she reached home, she went towards the kennels with the vague idea of letting all the dogs out at once just to see what would happen. But presently she thought better of that, and turned away. She went on past the house and into the gardens which lay to the westward. They were rather large gardens, and exceedingly well kept in an informal old-fashioned way. The head gardener, who was a Bavarian, took much pride in his work, though his master never seemed to be aware that there were any gardens on the place at all.

Vittoria went in between the two stone gate-posts and down the neatly kept box-bordered path to the central pool, which was fed by a spring and overflowed in three little waterfalls into another pool on the broad terrace below. She stood a moment by the stone margin of the pool, and a score of little goldfish came and stared at her with big eyes, thinking they were about to be fed. Mr. Hennessy backed away, growling resentfully, for he had once been beaten for fishing, and Vittoria laughed at him, and they went on, round the water, and so, by a trellised path, to the lower level, and finally to the girl's own special property, the little enclosure shut in from all the rest by high brick walls.

The ancient walls were crumbling and the iron gate hung awry, but, within, all manner of delectable things grew in a tangle (to the Bavarian's despair), and there was a fountain with a broken spout and a cracked stone margin, there were two benches sadly overgrown with moss, and there was even a sundial, which a certain sleek and pensive tabby cat had chosen to sun herself upon. The enclosure hung upon the brow of an out-thrust spur of that plateau whereon the house and garden of Standish were perched, and from its farther wall the ground dropped away gently to the plain below. One saw a portion of the distant straggling village with its three church towers, and the line of the railway.

Vittoria broke off a bud from one of the late roses, which was just coming into flower, and looked down upon herself for a place to fasten it; but there were no buttonholes in front, and she had no pins save those urgently employed. In the end she stuck it in her hair behind one ear, and immediately looked more than ever before like the well-known operatic lady—in the rôle of Carmen. She sat down upon one of the stained benches and pulled off her fluffy hat, for she was in shade there, the shade of a tall cedar of

Lebanon, which grew just outside the old brick wall and leant obligingly inward.

Mr. Hennessy, dog-like, rushed from corner to corner of the place and worked himself up into quite a fever of zeal over some imaginary quest; but the quest seemed to come to nothing, for, as suddenly as he had begun it, he gave over, and remained for a long time quite still and rigid at the foot of the sundial, glaring up at the somnolent tabby cat, who blinked contemptuously back at him. But Vittoria made herself very comfortable in one corner of the stained old bench, and closed her eyes in a placid content very like the tabby cat's. The same mood of pleasant apathy of which she had been conscious earlier was still upon her. It is an afternoon feeling, really—a summer afternoon feeling, and everybody knows it perfectly well, but it came to Vittoria in the morning, and she was so peaceful and contented that she no longer even wished to be a man with a pipe to smoke.

The air was both warm and cool together and as soft as perfumed silk; there was no sound from anywhere save the little splashing sound of the water as it dropped down in miniature cascades from pool to pool, and, at times, the far-away lowing of a cow. But abruptly, in the midst of that gentle peace, Mr. Hennessy growled, faced about towards the gate, and growled again. After a moment he advanced a few stern paces and began to bark. Vittoria opened her eyes and said: "Bother! Who's coming?"

It was not the old gardener, for Mr. Hennessy allowed that faithful being to come and go without comment, so she thought it must be Beau Temple. At first she was aware of a faint regret—the wish that he hadn't come—a feeling that she was not quite ready for Temple; but no sooner had the feeling made itself known, than, to put the thing fancifully, she flew at it, denying it with a quite disproportionate anger. She said that she was *always* ready for Beau—always! Always eager and glad of him.

Footsteps came down the gravel path, crisp and firm, so then she was sure it was Temple, and called to the terrier.

"Hennessy, stop that noise! Don't be a little fool!" She heard a laugh, the crazy iron gate swung open, and Richard Blake came into her garden.

She knew that she gave a smothered cry, and afterwards she knew that it had been a glad cry, coming from somewhere very deep

within her, deep down under the feelings over which her consciousness held sway—the bottom of the well, perhaps. And so it may be that the sweet enchantment of those forbidden dreams was still faintly upon her. It may be that the mood of the morning had been a sort of preparation for this meeting—had softened her for it.

She got to her feet, and Blake held her hand in his—so she must have put it out towards him. From a great distance she heard him explaining how he had been in the near neighbourhood on a morning's exploration, and despite the hour had dared take advantage of her permission to call. Vaguely she heard him say that he had been sent down from the house by the stable boy who had taken the horse, and had seen his mistress go into the gardens, and, vaguely still, she heard him say civil things about her roses; but the words meant very little to her—half-heard phrases when the mind is elsewhere.

While her voice repeated, machine-like, the customary banalities in answer: "Do you think so? Yes, we find it pretty," or such-like nonsense, it seemed to her that, within, she was struggling for tangible grasp upon the realities—the new realities which bounded and determined her life. And it seemed to be curiously difficult to reach them. By all obvious rights and settled determinations she should have met Mr. Richard Blake with a cool and distant and very discouraging indifference—not with frozen anger, as on the day previous, only with indifference, but there was no force in her to compel the mood. Rather, perhaps, there was nothing in the man to evoke it—or perhaps it was both these things.

He faced her with grave and tender eyes—eyes that she had seen twice before, once in a ballroom and once in a park, and she had never forgotten them as they were, with that look in them, and she knew that she never would forget them, however hard she might try and however long she might live. The man's bearing completed upon her the enchantment which those forbidden dreams had begun, the sweet and fragrant morning had continued. She could not meet him with indifference. Still, for one brief instant, she faced something like peril, and knew it for what it was, but she closed her eyes and thrust the thing away—rather furtively. She said to herself that there was no peril for her. Was she not safe from all perils—at anchor in a still harbour? She leant upon the thought of her engagement

(rather hastily to change the metaphor) as upon a firm rock, immovable in its security.

She became aware that neither she nor Blake was speaking, and she flushed and made a brief sound of laughter.

"Why don't you say something?" she demanded. "Haven't you any conversation at all?" And at that he echoed her laughter and said—

"I talked prodigiously a few moments ago, but you had the air of paying no attention to me, so I decided that I must have interrupted a train of thought, and I was abashed. Were you thinking of something very interesting when I burst in upon you here?" She shook her head after an instant's reflection.

"No. I don't think I was thinking at all. I think I was just purring. Was I absent-minded with you? That's very rude, and I apologise. Probably I was half asleep when you came." She sat down again in one corner of the moss-grown bench, but the man remained standing before her, and Mr. Hennessy stood near, fixing the stranger with a stern and distrustful eye.

"I'm very glad," Blake said, "to see you at last with your own surroundings—here at Standish. D'you remember telling me about Standish when we first met?"

"Yes," said she, nodding. "Yes, I remember—at that dance. I seem to remember that I was rather solemn and absurd. I don't quite know why."

"I don't seem to remember that," he answered, "though my memory is good. I remember that I wanted to hear a good deal more, but—I saw you so few times."

That was an unfortunate thing to say, and he regretted it almost before the words were out. It brought a flush to his cheeks and a frown to his brows, but Vittoria did not see, because she kept her eyes down. She spread her two hands out upon her lap and regarded them carefully, as if for some reason she were critical of them, but the man's speech left her unembarrassed and unafraid, and she was mildly surprised at herself.

"Three times altogether," said she, "not counting yesterday. I refuse to count yesterday, because I was in a vile humour and probably insulted you—didn't I?"

She looked up at him for a swift instant, but at once looked down again, because even now she could not meet his eyes quite calmly.

"And that brings me to something I've never had a chance to say. Well, yes, I had a chance yesterday, but, then, that vile

humour, you see! I've never had a chance to say how very grateful I was and am for what you—what you did for me. You really saved my life, you know. Of course, men hate to be thanked. I know that, but I can't let you go on thinking that I took it too lightly—didn't realise how serious it was. If I'd seen you afterwards——" She broke off there, because she was getting back to that dangerous matter of the man's deliberate neglect, and she looked up and, as it were, finished her sentence with a smile. But she looked no higher than Blake's chin.

He made a little movement before her. She had the odd impression that he was "squaring himself," as the phrase goes—spreading his feet for a firmer stand, as if he were on board ship in a seaway. He said—

"May I explain something to you?" He went on rather hastily, and without waiting for an answer, as if he were afraid of being stopped.

"When I left you that day in the Park—when you rode away with Monty Bellingham—and I went back home, I fully expected to call at Mrs. Dudley's in the afternoon. I meant to let nothing in the world interfere. Well, about four o'clock I had a telephone message from an old aunt of mine, asking me to come at once to her house on a matter of great importance. I went there, still expecting to go on at once to Mrs. Dudley's, but I found my aunt, who is a nervous old soul, frightfully worried about some absurd business matter that her lawyers had communicated to her. It took me nearly two hours to convince her that she wasn't on the verge of complete ruin. Well, then I rushed to your house—to Mrs. Dudley's—hoping that I might still find you, but I was told that you and Mrs. Dudley had gone up to dress, because you were dining early—for the theatre. The next morning the same legal tangle that my aunt had got into took me out of town for a week or more. The day after I returned to town I went early to the Farings', with the idea of going on to you at a more respectable hour. Béatrix told me that you had left for Standish. And so that's why I never saw you again. Please say you understand!"

Vittoria remained with her head bent, still looking down at her two hands outspread in her lap. And she did not answer at once. But presently she said—

"Of course I understand. It's plain enough. But you speak as if I'd been

attacking you—browbeating you for not coming to call upon me. I haven't, have I? You speak as if I'd been accusing you of staying away on purpose." She spoke in that perfectly colourless tone which people use when they are trying to hide what they really feel, and the man gave a sudden exclamation that was almost like a cry. It seemed to be the outburst of something intolerable. His hands moved stiffly for a moment at his sides, and he put them behind him, and gripped them together there.

"I did stay away from you on purpose!" he said, and at that Vittoria finally looked up to him, at first with sheer astonishment in her eyes, afterwards with a still gravity. And she did not take her eyes away. His face was as it had been when he saw her in danger, when she had opened her eyes and seen it bent close over her.

"I did stay away from you on purpose!" he said again, and she knew that he was speaking words torn from him by sheer stress of feeling—true words that he had tried not to speak.

"Not then," he said. "Not that last time—that couldn't be helped—but before. I didn't dare see you. I thought that if I made myself stay away, I would forget you. I was a fool! I was a fool! I knew in the very beginning—in that first hour—I knew what you—were to me—must always be, but I fought against it. I wouldn't confess the truth even to myself. I wanted to be free. I was a fool!" He threw up his arms, open, in a queer, awkward gesture, and he was breathing hard.

"Surely you knew!" he said. "You saw. You understood. Women—they always know these— You knew why I stayed away?" He began to tremble quite absurdly, but it did not seem absurd to him, for he stood cold and shaken and frightened, like a man half anæsthetised, or who has received a violent blow. He had not in the least meant to come to ultimate conclusions with this headlong abruptness. The words had said themselves. Out of a moment's despair, at what he conceived to be her unbelief, they had burst prodigiously—without intention, without plan, without coherence—rather like the bursting of a dam. He stood amongst the surge of them, aghest at what he had done.

Vittoria got to her feet before him, white-faced, with burning eyes. She did not know that she had made a movement. She was conscious only of some bewilderment and of a strange physical distress. The air had

become suddenly hard to breathe, so that she gasped for it a little, and she had the sensation of being bathed in something powerfully electrical. It was not pleasant at all; it was painful and rather terrifying. But through that fiery haze she heard the man's voice, flat and unnatural in tone. He said again—or the words said themselves—

"You knew why I stayed away?" And Vittoria answered him—

"No!... I was a fool, too... I didn't know." She wrung her hands.

"I didn't know!" she said. "Oh, I didn't know!"

Blake cried her name twice, and he took a step towards her, with outstretched arms. He was so near that one hand touched her. There seemed to be something magical in the mere physical contact, for quite suddenly that fiery cloaking mist which had enveloped the girl was rent away, and she saw where she was. She shrank back from him, and when he would have followed her, held up her hands to stop him. She said in a stumbling, breathless whisper—

"No! No! Please stay where you are! ... Wait!" She turned away and stood for a little space with her face bowed over upon her hands. The man waited immovably. It was as if he had been frozen there—turned to stone.

Then after a pause Vittoria began to speak, hurriedly still, but without excitement. And she remained with her back towards him. She said—

"I should have told you—I meant to tell you, but you—all this came so suddenly—before I knew. I didn't realise what you were going to say. I am—engaged to be married to Beaumont Temple. I told him definitely yesterday that I would marry him, and I shall keep my word." She turned half about, and her head, with its dark hair and the rosebud against it, was uplifted proudly, but she did not look at Richard Blake. She said—

"I love him. I want you to understand that. I want to marry him. I shall be very, very happy all my life. I have known him always, and I trust him and respect him more than anyone else in the world—and love him. I am proud to love him. . . . I—please—" She clasped her hands hard before her and looked away.

"I am sorry—sorrrier than I can say—to have let you say what you did. It seems cruel, but I truly didn't know. I give you my word that I didn't know. I had been—hurt by your staying away from me



“I shall keep my word.”



in London, and I was glad, so glad, to hear you say that—that you—to explain why it was, that you had gone farther than I should have let you go before I quite realised. I wish I thought you could forgive me.”

She took a few steps away and stood before one of the rose bushes. She began to break off the leaves and even the young buds from the top of the bush, but she did not in the least realise what she was doing. Mr. Hennessy came to her feet and began to whine. He knew that his lady was, in some obscure fashion, troubled, and his Irish heart was wrung with sympathetic woe. When she did not even look down to him, he elevated his nose and emitted one long, dolorous howl. Then Vittoria hushed him and turned back.

Blake seemed not to have moved from his place, but his outstretched hands he had lowered and clasped again behind him. From his face the girl could tell nothing of what he might be thinking. He had not a great range of facial expression—quite the reverse, in fact. His eyes could be very eloquent; they could be cold and hard, with little glittering lights in them: or they could turn soft and very tender—and at such times they seemed to become darker than they really were, and full of shadows: or, in certain moods, they could blaze with a sort of sombre fury that was as terrible as it was happily rare. But apart from his eyes the man's face expressed singularly little. In moments of stress it became very slightly pale and somewhat drawn and rather forbidding, though the stress might be of any kind at all.

Vittoria watched him anxiously and waited for him to speak. And after a still moment he said—

“Was there never any chance for me, then?”

“There was once,” said she, “but you wouldn't take it.” And at that he gave an exceedingly bitter cry and covered his face with his hands. Afterwards he said to her—

“I cannot give you up. It is impossible—unthinkable. I have behaved throughout—from the beginning—like a madman, and I deserve to lose you, but I cannot face it. It's too much to me—everything—all my world! At least I have loved you.

Though I behaved like a lunatic, I have loved you from the first moment I ever saw you, and I cannot give up hope. I can no more give up hoping than I can give up breathing. It's impossible.

“I am quite aware,” he said, “that most people would call it dishonourable for me to say these things to you, when you have told me that you are engaged to marry another man, but it cannot harm you. It cannot possibly do you any harm to know that I love you and have loved you all the little time I have known you!”

Vittoria listened with uplifted face and closed eyes, her hands at her breast. It was the sweet forbidden dreams come true. In her dream Blake had said that he loved her, that all the long period of neglect and seeming scorn had been a hideous mistake, and now he was saying it in the waking life, under the golden morning sun, and she could no more help thrilling to his words—exulting in them, than in those enchanted dream hours.

But when Blake's voice ceased, she came to herself with a sudden start and opened her eyes. He was not looking at her; his head was bent and his eyes fixed upon the ground before him.

She said—

“I'm not offended with you. In a sense—I'm glad to know. Both glad and sorry, perhaps. But there mustn't—we mustn't speak of it any more, must we? You must not make it hard for me.” She said most of the trite and banal things that women at such times find to say—things well enough intentioned—meant to comfort—that he must try to forget her, put love for her out of his heart, go back to his busy, pleasant life. But the man shook his head sadly, saying—

“I think you know that I'm not the forgetting kind. It would be impossible.” For an instant he awoke again to that fierce rebellion.

“I won't give you up. I tell you, it's inconceivable. I cannot believe that you are lost to me for ever.”

Then the neglected Mr. Hennessy began once more to bark, and Blake turned his eyes up the garden path. He said—

“Somebody is coming down from the house. Who is it?”

# ENGLAND'S STORY IN PORTRAIT AND PICTURE.

## III. THE REIGN OF ALFRED THE GREAT.

**A**LFRED, the prince of the Saxon House of Cerdic, who was destined to live throughout the ages as one of the greatest and wisest rulers that the world's history can show, was the fifth son of Ethelwulf, the son of Egbert, and Osburga, his queen, daughter of Earl Oslac, "the King's Cup-bearer," and was born at Wantage, probably in the year 848. The year 853 is the first date we can mark in his career with any picture of his childhood's days, for then it was that he was sent by his father, as a child of five, to Rome. There is a letter extant addressed to King Ethelwulf, announcing the safe arrival of the boy, and that graceful artist, Richard Westall, R.A., painted the moment in which, tradition avers, the then Pontiff, Leo IV., conferred the rite of confirmation upon him, and crowned him as a future king of England. The latter ceremony must not be construed too literally, as the boy had then four elder brothers living. Alfred remained abroad, it would seem, till 856, when he was followed by his father, to whom all united in showing honour, as to a powerful Saxon

monarch who had given good proofs of his devotion to the Church. He remained in Rome more than a year. This sojourn abroad of Ethelwulf was disastrous to his rule at home;

for his eldest surviving son, Ethelbald, seized the crown, and, rather than rend the country with civil war, Ethelwulf agreed to a division of the kingdom; and, giving up Wessex to Ethelbald, although he remained its overlord, retained the smaller kingdoms of Kent, Essex, and Sussex, which, by the death of his son Athelstan, some little time before, had returned to his rule. History is silent as to the cause of the quarrel between Ethelwulf and Ethelbald, but modern opinion inclines to the idea that this rebellion on the part of the son owed its origin to the marriage which his father had, probably for political reasons, contracted, in the course of his foreign tour,

with the thirteen-year-old daughter of the French king, Charles the Bold, putting aside for this purpose his wife Osburga, the pious, intellectual mother of his five sons. Ethelwulf died in 857 and the joint kingdom



*Photo by]*

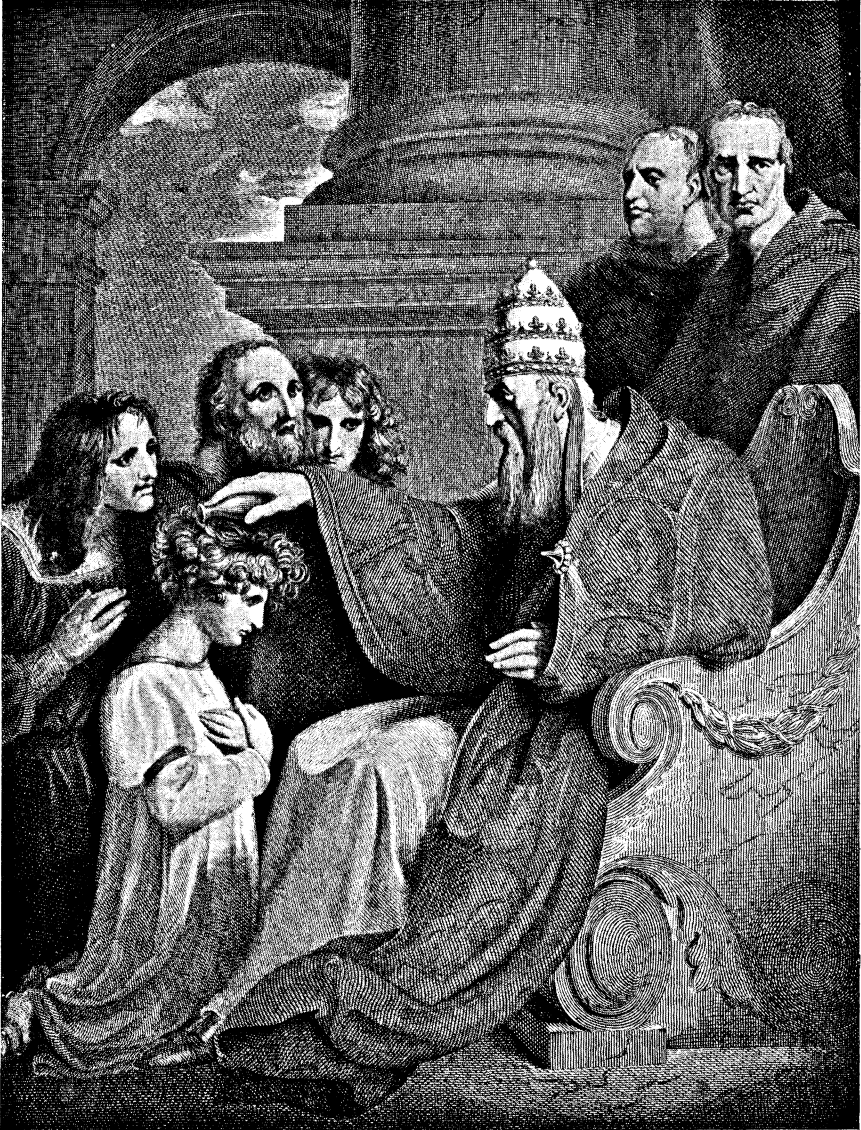
*[F. Frith & Co., Reigate.*

STATUE OF ALFRED, BY HAMO THORNYCROFT, R.A., ERECTED AT WINCHESTER AT THE MILLENNARY CELEBRATION IN 1901.

of Kent, Essex, and Sussex, then in his possession, passed to his second surviving son, Ethelbert, while Ethelbald remained ruler of Wessex.

Ethelbald died in A.D. 860, and the

brother Alfred was in close association, was described in our preceding article. Ethelred died in 871 from a wound received in battle with the Danes, and Alfred, in his twenty-second year, ascended the throne.

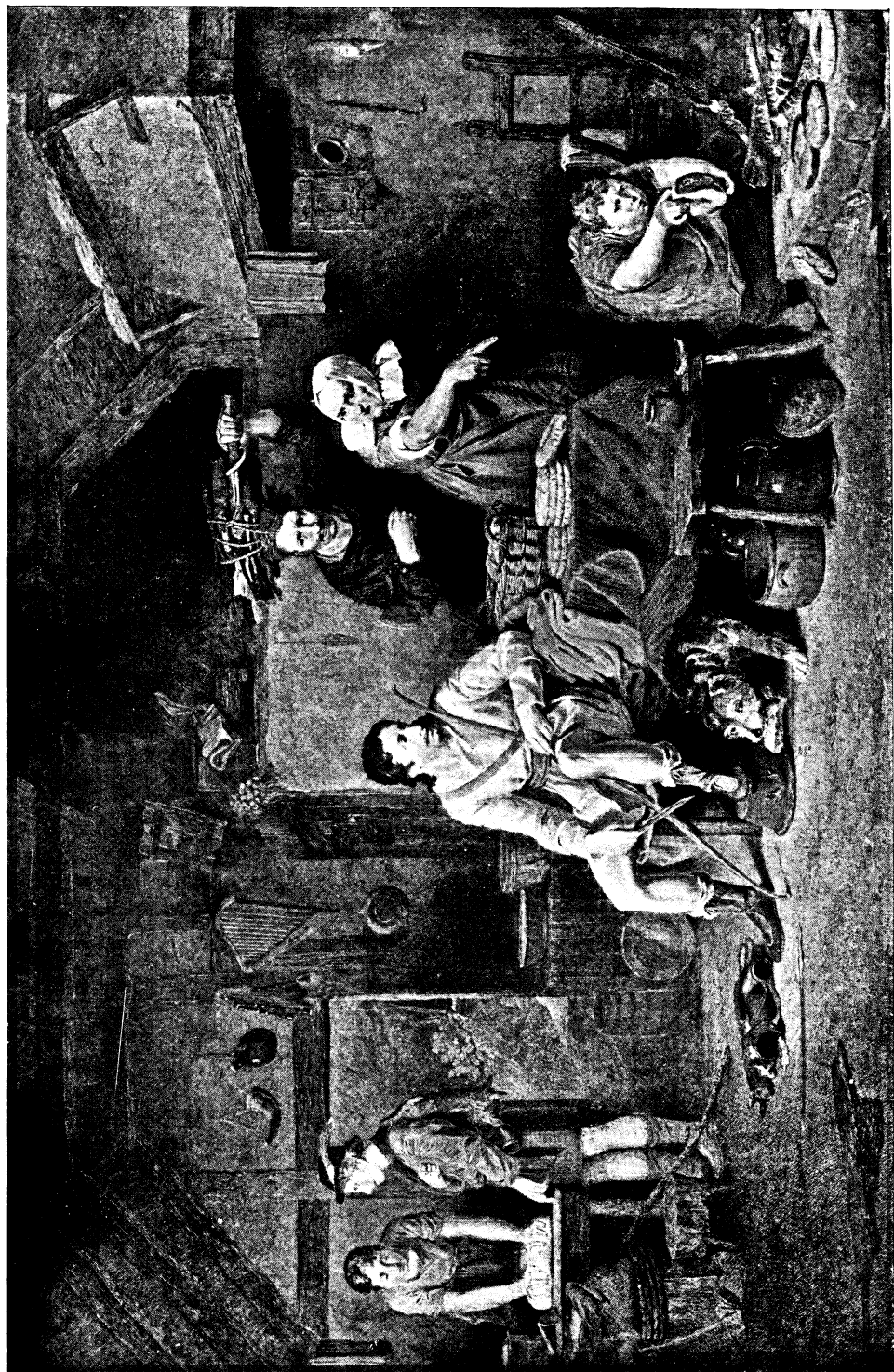


"ALFRED, AS A BOY, RECEIVING THE BENEDICTION OF POPE LEO IV."

BY RICHARD WESTALL, R.A.

crown of Wessex then descended to Ethelbert, who already held that of the minor kingdom; and at his death, five years later, there came to the throne his brother Ethelred, whose warfare against the Danes, in which his

The accession of Alfred seems, says Dr. Hodgkin (in "A Political History of England," edited by Dr. William Hunt and Reginald Poole) "to have passed almost unnoticed, in the deadly earnestness of the



"KING ALFRED IN THE HOUSE OF THE NEATHERD." BY DAVID WILKIE, R.A.

*From the picture in the collection of the Duke of Wellington.*



"ALFRED IN THE HOUSE OF THE NEATHERD." BY F. WHEATLEY, R.A.

great encounter" between his people and the Danes. Already the Danes were masters of Northumbria, Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridge-shire, and Lincolnshire, for where they had not conquered they had laid the land waste. They had entrenched themselves at York, and held command of the Thames from its source in the Cotswolds to the Nore. Alfred was unable to make headway against his powerful enemies, and after several defeats he was obliged to conclude a peace by which, in the very year of his accession, he renounced

his rights over all but Wessex. The Danes took advantage of the armistice with him to reduce Mercia and the portion of Northumbria between the Tyne and the Forth. Alfred now made an attempt to cope with the Danes on their own element, the sea, realising with what disastrous results the Anglo-Saxons had departed from the nautical habits of their ancestors. He built a small squadron, the foundation of the British Navy, with which he obtained some successes over the Vikings in the Channel in 875-877.





"ALFRED, DISGUISED AS A HARPER, IN THE DANISH CAMP." BY THOMAS STOTHARD, R.A.



"ALFRED RECEIVING A FLAG OF TRUCE FROM THE DANES." BY G. BLAKEY.







"THE SUBMISSION OF GUTHRUM, THE DANE, TO ALFRED." A TAPESTRY DESIGN BY HERBERT A. BONE.

Reproduced by permission of Mr. G. A. Gibbs, M.P.

got to but in a boat." It lies at the junction of the Tone and the Parret.

Here Alfred rallied unto him a band of devoted warriors, whom he exercised in frequent sallies, and their spirits were greatly raised by a victory which their fellow-countrymen gained in Devonshire over a new body of Danes. After this Alfred disguised

himself as a harper, and penetrated into the Danish camp near Westbury, and was conducted even to the royal tent of Guthrum. He carefully observed the arrangements of the camp, and returned to his island to marshal his men for a final attempt. His attack was quite unexpected, and after they had suffered prodigious

slaughter, the Danes fled to a neighbouring entrenchment which they had constructed. Here they were closely besieged by Alfred, and Guthrum was at length fain to conclude the treaty of Wedmore, or Chippenham, on condition that he should become a Christian ; but East Anglia (Norfolk and Suffolk) was guaranteed to him, and shortly afterwards a

source, thence to Bedford, and from there along the River Ouse to the Roman road of Watling Street. When it is realised that, in addition to this new settlement, the Danes continued to hold the whole of the ancient kingdom of Northumbria as well, one can understand how completely Alfred must have despaired of ever expelling the invaders

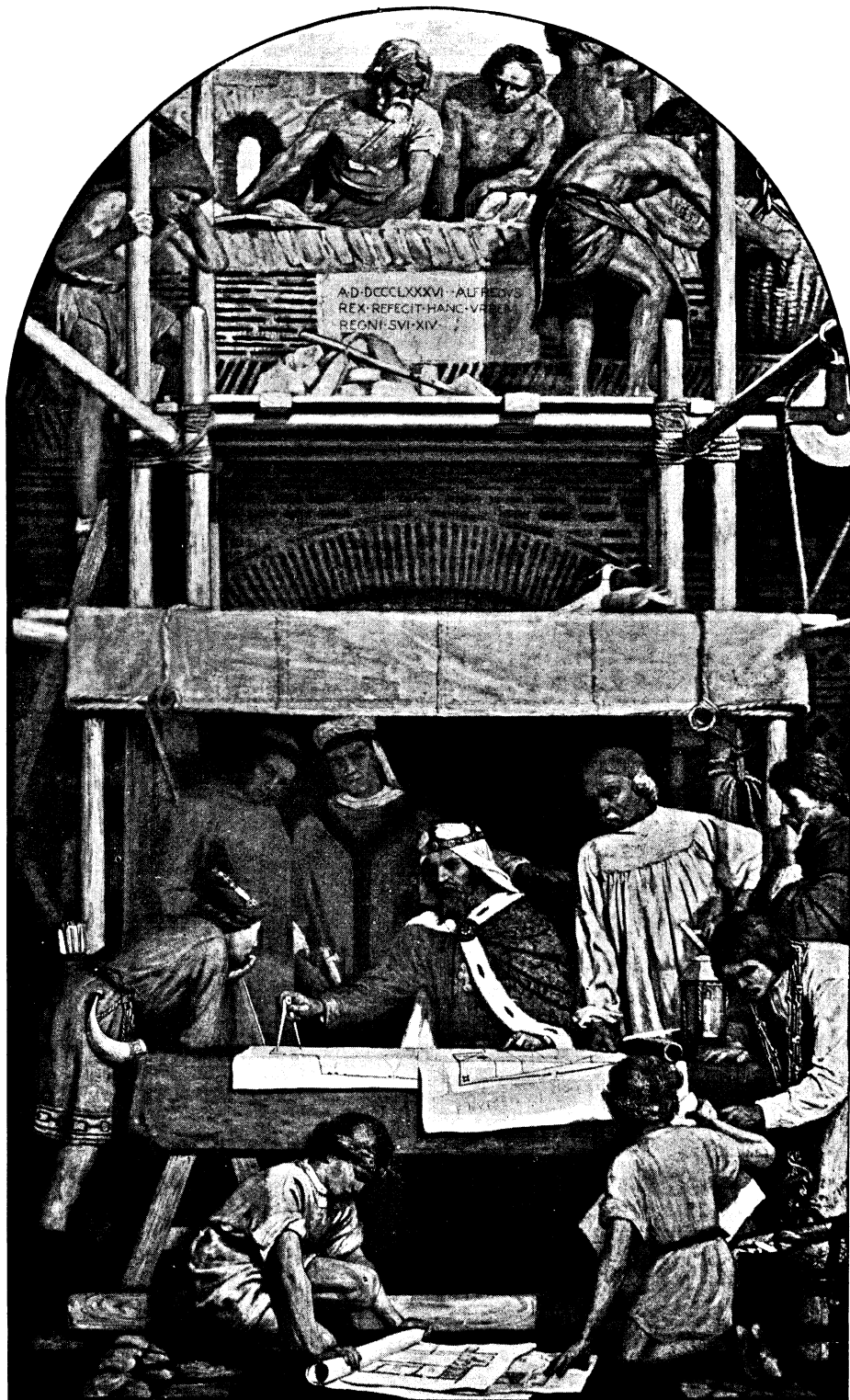


"ALFRED LIBERATING THE FAMILY OF HASTING." BY HENRY SINGLETON.

large part of Mercia was added. The fate which the Teutonic settlers had brought upon the native Britons had now befallen themselves, and the Anglo-Saxons recognised the Danes as the owners of a large part of England, a territory thenceforth known as the "Danelagh," which ranged from the mouth of the River Lea to its

from the country altogether, and appreciate his foresight in thus converting a large proportion of them into vassal settlers.

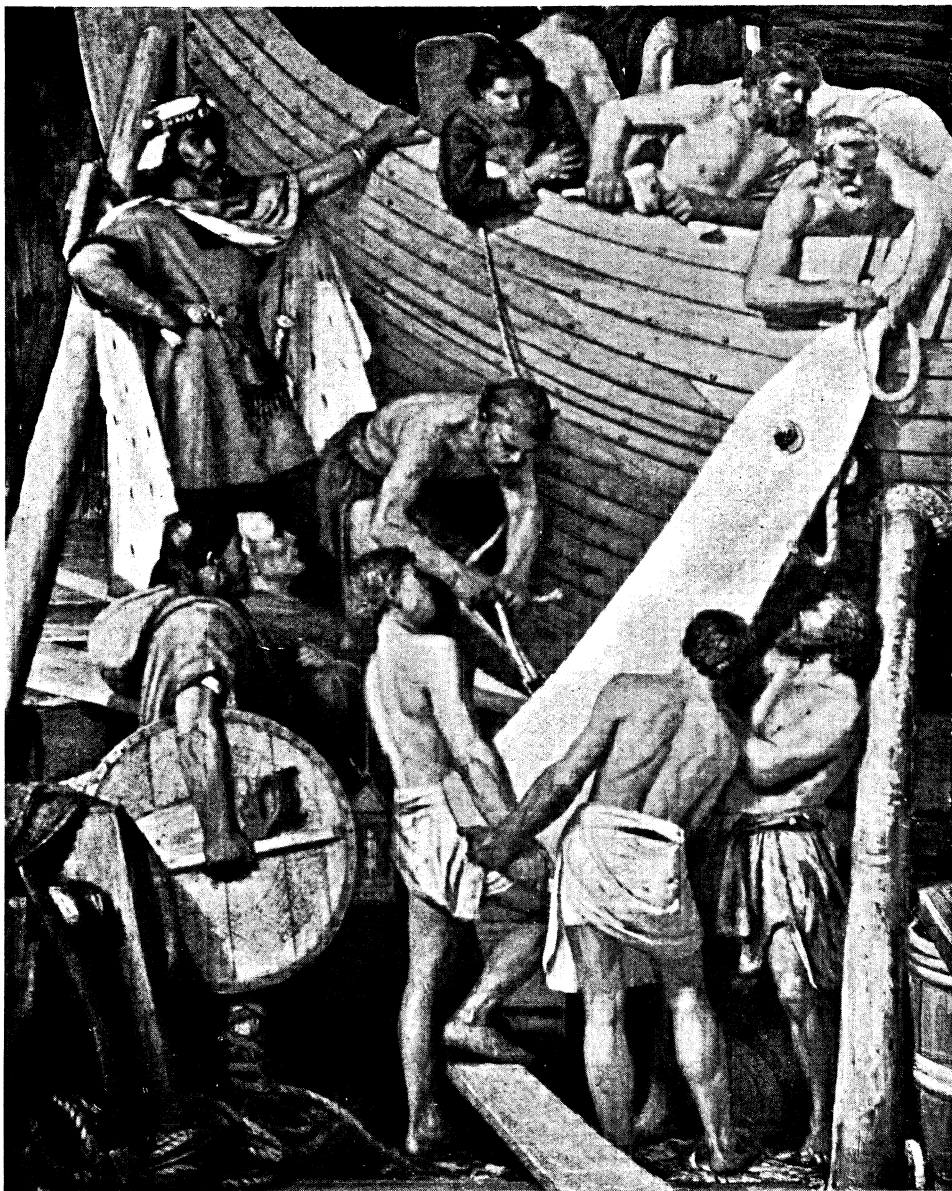
After this settlement Alfred was able to devote a few years to the domestic needs of his kingdom, to the rebuilding of war-ruined towns, the reconstruction of the laws passed in the days of Ine, of Offa, and of Ethelbert,



"ALFRED CONDUCTING THE REFORTIFICATION OF LONDON IN 886."

By H. R. MILEHAM.



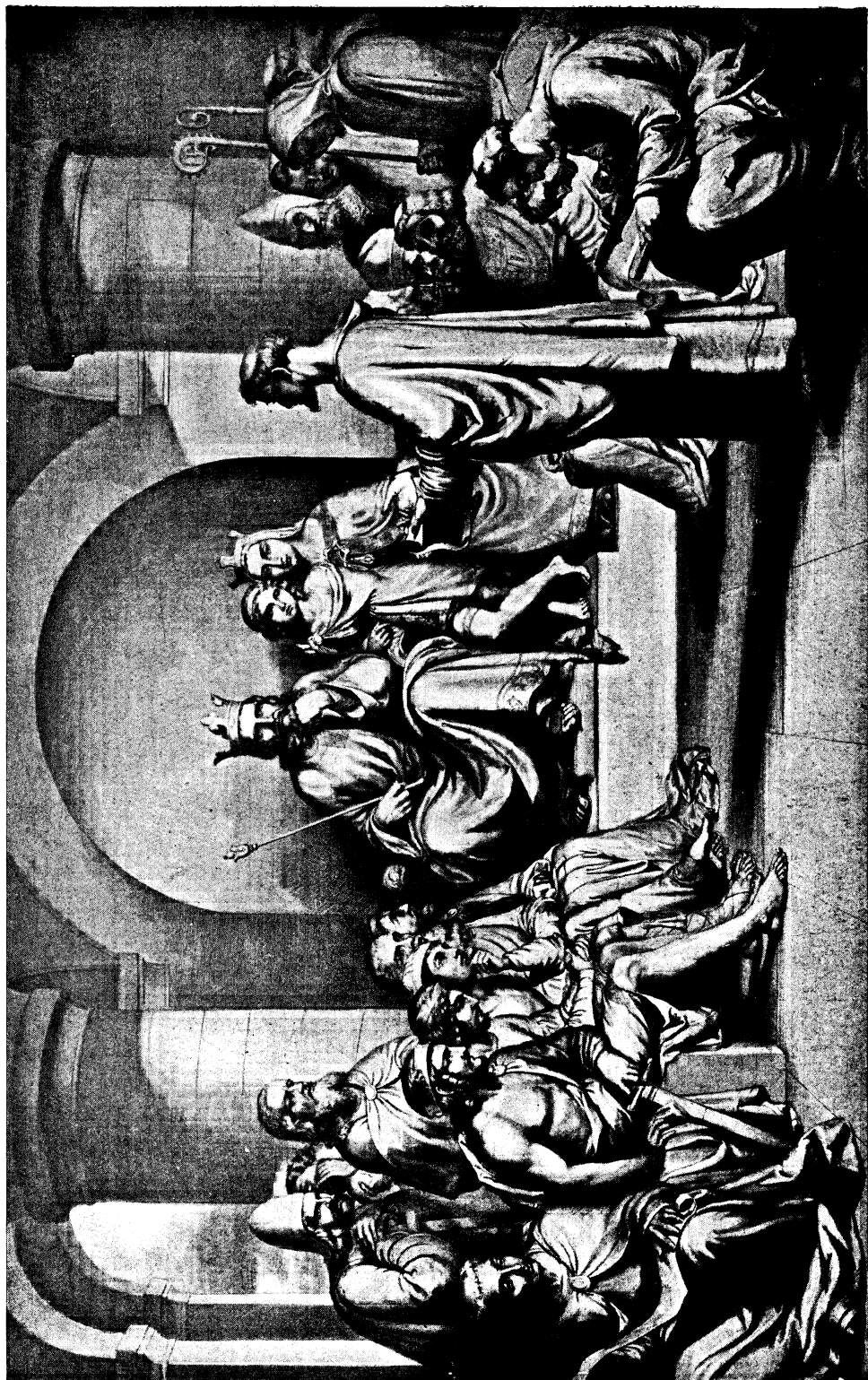


"ALFRED BUILDING HIS FLEET." BY H. R. MILEHAM.

submitting all to his Witan, and to the establishment of a national militia, under which every freeman was available for military service, the command being vested in the dukes or heretochs of counties. But in 893 he had again to meet a large body of invading Danes, under the command of Hasting, a famous sea-king, who arrived in the Thames, and, crossing the country, sought the alliance of Guthrum, but finding that he could not win Guthrum from his

allegiance to Alfred, after wintering at Fulham, passed over into Flanders.

Meantime, Alfred continued to increase his navy, to build ships of a larger size, and of such forms as were better adapted to ride out the storm and to grapple with the enemy on their own element. The Saxon and Danish ships were constantly coming in contact on the ocean, and at length victory began to declare itself in favour of the former.



"ALFRED SUBMITTING TO THE WITAN THE LAWS WHICH HE ADAPTED AND ENFORCED." BY JOHN BRIDGES.



The precise sequence of the engagements which ensued is difficult to follow, being, as the poet Milton deplored, "set down so perplexedly by the Saxon annalist," but—again to quote from Dr. Hodgkin's valuable study of Alfred's reign and military achievements—apparently, "two bodies of Danes, acting to some extent independently of each other," simultaneously invaded Saxon territory. Two hundred and fifty ships appeared on the Kentish coast, and another squadron of eighty ships, under Hasting, entered the Thames, took Milton, and threw up strong

and two sons, whom, however, with characteristic generosity, he immediately set free.

Then developed a struggle which, but for Alfred's military skill, might have altered the course of Anglo-Saxon history, for this latest descent of sea-rovers had found the resident Danes of the Danelagh ready to cast aside their loyalty to Alfred and join the invaders, Guthrum, apparently, having died, and Eric being ruler in his stead.

Perhaps the most lucid account of this period of tangled conflict, which Milton and other early historians found all too confused,



"ALFRED DIVIDING THE LOAF." BY BENJAMIN WEST, P.R.A.

*From the original in the collection of the Worshipful Company of Stationers.*

earthworks near the Isle of Sheppey. Ravaging as they went, the first horde made their way through Hampshire and Berkshire into Surrey, where, at Farnham, the young prince, Alfred's eldest son, later known as Edward the Elder, defeated them. Meantime, Alfred, in the west country, forced the Danes to raise the siege of Exeter, and then marched to Benfleet, in Essex, a fortified Danish stronghold, which, with his son-in-law, Ethelred, Ealdorman of the Mercians, he carried by storm. Before his arrival his troops had taken prisoners Hasting's wife

both in the life of Alfred by his contemporary and friend, Asser, and in "The Saxon Chronicle," is that evolved by Palgrave in his "History of the Anglo-Saxons." After Alfred's successes at Benfleet, he says, the Danes harried Mercia, but were presently driven back into a disadvantageous position on the banks of the Severn, where they were surrounded and nearly starved out. Yet they broke through and rallied again in Essex. Then they crossed through the Danelagh up to Chester, from where they plundered Wales, till the Britons of that

country rose and joined in aiding Alfred against their mutual enemy. This forms an interesting point of union between Briton and Saxon. Having gathered again in Essex, the Danes pressed so closely upon London, that Alfred was obliged to encamp with his army round the city whilst the citizens got in their harvest. The Danes had chosen a station on the River Lea, and

Danelagh, and Hasting sailed for France. Thereafter, the Danish attacks were again more of the nature of sea-rovers' descents on the coast, and Alfred, with his much-developed navy of new and larger ships, was able to inflict severe defeat upon them in a battle off the coast of Hampshire. In all later, less organised attacks, Alfred was thenceforth able to prove the victor, and



"ALFRED TRANSLATING THE 'PASTORAL CARE.'" BY H. R. MILEHAM.

here Alfred's inventive genius threw up two earthworks below the Danish station, then lowered the level of the river by cutting channels which drained it into the Thames, and so prevented the Danes from getting their vessels out. They were thus obliged to abandon the position, and, leaving their boats, retired into the Severn Valley. By the following year they seem to have dispersed amongst their kindred of the

sundry Danish crews of marauders were taken prisoners and promptly hung, even Alfred's sense of mercy being overruled by the need for showing no quarter to so persistent a foe.

The Norsemen of Northumbria and East Anglia were severely punished for aiding the invaders.

The foregoing is but the barest outline of the warfare, much abbreviated from

Palgrave, and gives little idea of the minutely scientific strategy which Alfred developed, especially in keeping two separate forces of the enemy well apart throughout most of the campaign; but it is all that space here allows us, and serves merely to preserve the continuity of the story. Those for whom the pictures of our present brief article may have revived the interest of the subject will find it vividly presented in much fuller detail in that valuable summary, "The Historians' History," and in Dr. Hodgkin's volume already mentioned. Other sources of information to which reference should also be made are the admirable articles on "England," "Alfred," and "The Danes," in "The Encyclopædia Britannica." The principal early authorities for all the facts of Alfred's life and reign are the biography of him compiled by his friend Asser—to which many traditional stories were eventually added—and "The Saxon Chronicle," which was begun under Alfred's own direction and continued by ecclesiastical hands under every reign down to the year 1154.

Alfred now attained to the zenith of his power. Wessex and the greater part of Mercia formed his kingdom, the rulers of Northumbria and East Anglia were tributary, and the princes of the Britons and the Scottish king formed alliances with him. The remaining four years of his life were devoted to the arts of peace, and then the country realised to the full the benefits of his sagacious rule. For, as Milton picturesquely puts it: "From the time of his undertaking regal charge, no man more patient in hearing causes, more inquisitive in examining, more exact in doing justice and providing good laws, which are yet extant; more severe in punishing unjust judges of obstinate offenders. Justice seemed in his days not to flourish only, but to triumph. No man than he more frugal of two precious things in man's life, his time and his revenue; no man wiser in the disposal of both. His time, the day and night, he distributed by the burning of certain tapers into three equal portions: the one was for devotion, the other for public and private affairs, the third for bodily rest and refreshment. . . . His whole annual revenue he divided into two equal parts. The first he employed to secular uses, and subdivided those into three, the first to pay his soldiers, household servants, and guard, of which, divided into three bands, one attended monthly by turn. The second was to pay his architects and workmen, whom he had got together of

several nations. The third he had in readiness to relieve or honour strangers, according to their worth, who came from all parts to see him and to live under him. The other equal part of his yearly wealth he dedicated to religious uses—those of four sorts: the first to relieve the poor, the second to building and maintenance of two monasteries, the third of a school, where he had persuaded the sons of many noblemen to study sacred knowledge and liberal arts. The fourth was for the relief of foreign churches, as far as India, to the shrine of St. Thomas, sending thither Sigelm, Bishop of Sherburn, and sent many to Rome.

"He thirsted after all liberal knowledge, and oft complained that in his youth he had no teachers, in his middle age so little vacancy from wars and the cares of his kingdom. Yet leisure he found sometimes, not only to learn much himself, but to communicate thereof what he could to his people, by translating books out of Latin into English"—"The Pastoral Care" of Gregory the Great; "The Consolation of Philosophy," by Boethius; "The Ecclesiastical History of the English," by Bede; and "The Epitome" of Orosius—besides making many proverbs and verses, his aim being to remedy the loss of learning which the country had suffered by the ravages of the Danes.

"Thus far," as Milton concludes, "and much more might be said of his noble mind, which rendered him the mirror of princes. His body was diseased in his youth with a great soreness in the siege, and that ceasing of itself, with another inward pain of unknown cause, which held him by frequent fits to his dying day, yet not disenabled him to sustain those many glorious labours of his life both in peace and war."

Alfred died at a date which is given variously as 899, 900, and 901. He was buried at Winchester, and was succeeded on the throne by his son Edward, whose mother, Egelswitha, daughter of Ethelred, a noble of Mercia, he had married a year before he ascended the throne.

Milton's fine phrase, "The Mirror of Princes," summarises Alfred's splendid qualities even more fittingly than the affectionate twelfth-century title of "England's Darling"; and to these may appropriately be added the glowing tribute of a modern statesman, Lord Rosebery, who, at the Alfred Millenary, described him as "the embodiment of our modern civilisation."

# THE OBSTACLE.

By ARTHUR ECKERSLEY.



THE old man sat, huddled a little forward, upon one of the stone benches at an angle of the ramparts. He was in the same place so constantly that by now he had come to be a familiar figure to the few

loungers, or those still fewer whom business led past that particular spot during the sunny part of the day. Some of them would greet him with a nod or a word of salutation, which he was always punctilious to return, waking apparently out of his abstraction for the moment and slipping back into it again directly afterwards. As the footsteps died away, and silence fell again upon the flagged pathway, where the grass that had sprung up between the stones was already withering in the long summer heat, he would resume his old position, thin hands crossed upon the top of his stick, and head sunk forward, with eyes that were always half closed and yet seemed to see everything that passed below him. There was a great view from that seat—the lower town, the harbour, and miles upon miles of glittering sea to the islands and the distant horizon, where about noon the smoke of the English steamer would appear first as a faint cloud upon the blue. It was the old man's daily interest to watch for it.

Apparently he had few others in life; but then, for the matter of that, no one in the town really knew anything about him at all. In the cheap boarding-house near the walls, which had been his home now for six or seven years, he had begun by being an enigma and ended by being accepted as a matter of course. At meals in the public room he spoke little to the other inmates, sitting reserved and silent at his own small table in the corner. The rest of the day he would spend, when it was fine, upon the ramparts, or, if not, at the window of his room, which commanded a view of the town-gate and through it a corner of the harbour. Even the *patronne* knew nothing more of her

English guest than that he paid his small weekly rent with regularity, and seemed to have no friends. He had made none, at least, among the colony of his compatriots in the town, and the letters that he received were few. This was all that she had with which to satisfy the curiosity of other visitors, Germans generally of small means, who came and went in the Rue Trebizond, and were attracted by the air of gentle mystery that surrounded the old man.

For some reason the steamer was later than usual to-day, and when at last she appeared, instead of, as was his habit, returning at once to *déjeuner*, he rose, and coming slowly down the steps beside the gate, passed through it and out upon the crowded quay. For quite a long time he stood there, a little apart from the press, leaning upon his stick, and watching the scene with an air of quiet attention. The porters hurrying to and fro under enormous burdens, the *gendarmes* dignified and aloof, the row of waiting omnibuses from the large hotels, and the throng of tourists herded together like sheep about the stack of luggage upon the deck of the steamer—all these things attracted his notice; he would have been surprised, if he had thought about it at all, to find himself so much interested. The strong sunshine seemed to have awakened in him an unusual clearness of perception. He felt almost young, forgetting altogether that it was now long past the hour of his meal. At length the process of disembarkation was over, and the last passenger, an elderly Englishman with a grizzled beard, who carried his own handbag and seemed to resent the offers of assistance that he received, had left the steamer. The watcher observed him also as he crossed the quay and disappeared within the gate. Then the omnibuses drove off, one after another, with a great cracking of whips and clattering over the uneven cobbles. The old man was left almost alone; with a start he realised this, and the lateness of the hour.

But the influence, whatever it was, was still strong upon him as he made his way back through the wide, empty street, where, behind closed shutters, the town was now taking its noontide siesta. Somehow, to-day,

the aspect of usual things seemed to have regained for him an extraordinary freshness. He caught himself once more looking at them all as though for the first time, with the eye of a stranger. A hundred half-forgotten associations crowded upon his mind, taking it back to the time when, as a fact, all this had been unfamiliar to him, a wayfarer from England, even then an old man, in search of the peaceful refuge that he had since found ; and, further still, to his own youth, separated from him now by such an infinity of quiet, not very successful, years. Odd how the memory of that had returned to-day. It was, perhaps, the sight of an actual stranger that had started the train of his thought, for in some unexplained way it seemed to connect itself in his mind with the figure of the bearded Englishman whose arrival he had just witnessed.

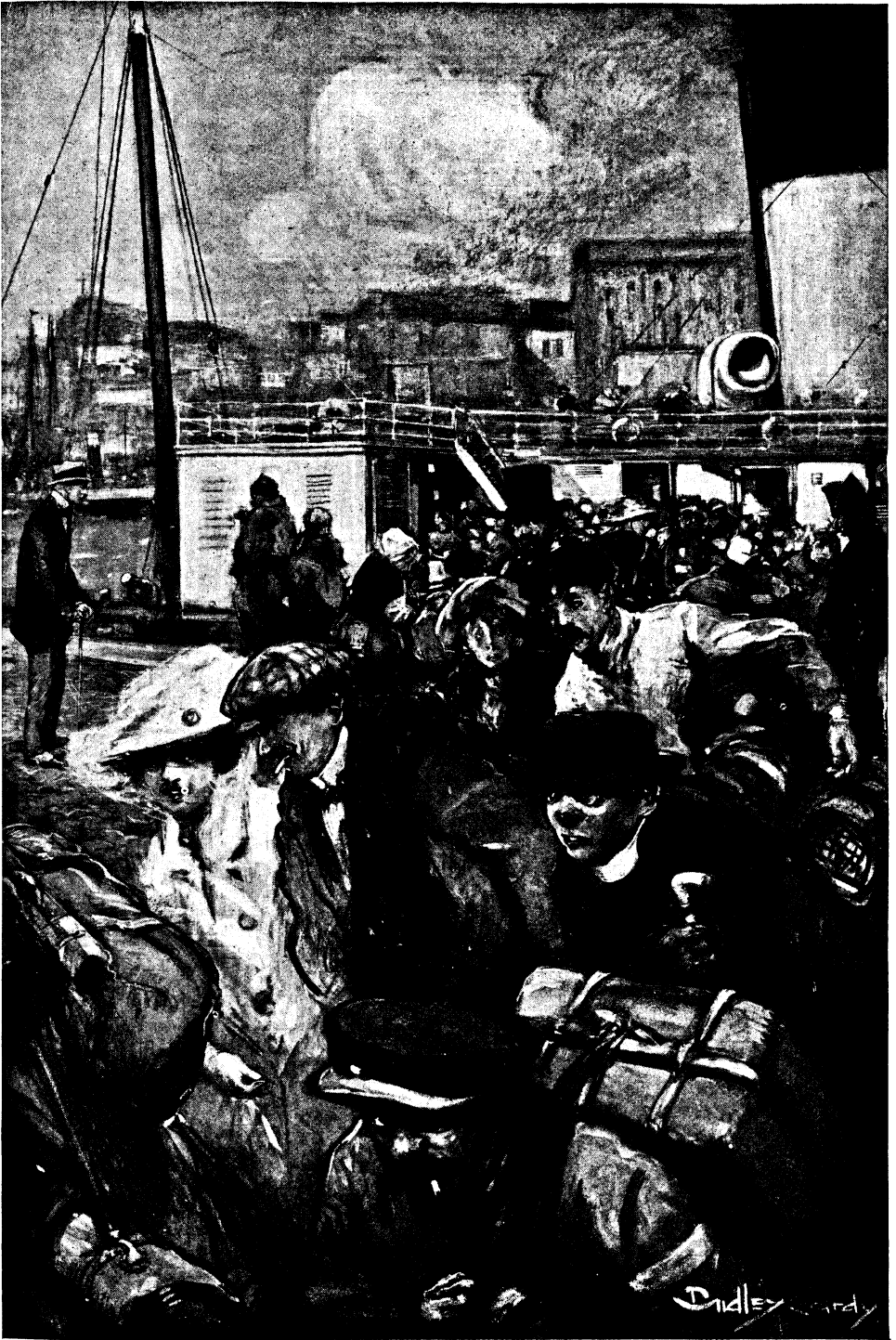
He was, therefore, hardly astonished at all when, on turning the corner of the Rue Trebizond, he saw in front of him the very man of whom he had been thinking. He, the stranger, was walking slowly, still carrying the handbag, and glancing about him with an air of hesitancy at the houses on either side. Finally his attention seemed to be caught by the notice over the door of the *pension* to which the old man behind him was returning. He paused and read it carefully, then, still with the same almost furtive air of caution, entered the passage. The other had watched all this ; as he himself passed through to the *salle à manger*, the stranger was already in negotiation with Madame in the tiny room that served as her office.

Presently, as he waited patiently at his own little table for such remains of food as should have been (under protest, doubtless) set aside for him, the other entered and seated himself in the opposite corner. The dining-room at the Pension Beaurivage, empty now but for the two Englishmen, could never have been regarded as amongst the attractions of the house. It was low and narrow, haunted by a constant flavour of bygone cooking, and the dark ceiling had the appearance of having cast a kind of dingy reflection upon the cloth below. There were always a great many flies in the room ; the droning buzz of them made a musical accompaniment to the meal which the two old men ate in silence at their respective tables. From outside, the strong sunlight, piercing the half-closed shutters, threw a shaft of intense white upon the darkness. It fell across the lower part of the stranger's

face, producing an effect like a scar ; he changed his position slightly so as to avoid it. The other was still watching him furtively from time to time, with an interest that did not grow any less. It occurred to him once or twice that it would be a friendly and even pleasant act to go across and enter into some conversation, but he hesitated so long that the bearded man had finished his meal and left the room before he had been able to make up his mind. But that he should have had such an impulse at all was at least as strange as anything else about the day, for it had never been his habit to make overtures of friendship to the other *pensionnaires* of the Beaurivage.

As a matter of fact, however, it was not until much later that he was able to put his plan into action, when, dinner being over, he found himself standing next to the stranger in the doorway of the house, looking out, in the vague, undecided fashion of those who have an empty evening before them, at the darkening street. With sundown a change had come over the weather ; masses of copper-hued cloud were gathering ominously in the west, and as he stood there, the first slow drops of a thunder shower began to splash upon the pavement. Clearly it would be impossible to listen to the band upon the ramparts to-night, as was his custom on fine summer evenings. His own room was the only alternative, but reading by lamplight tired his eyes, and somehow the prospect of sitting in solitude by his window watching the storm, as he would have done contentedly enough on any other evening, seemed now to be a lonely and cheerless ending to a day which had been, in its own fashion, almost exciting.

The thought revived his earlier resolution. For a moment or two he still hesitated, watching secretly the bearded man, who for his part seemed unconscious of the other's presence. He was looking out at the sky and the rain with an indifference that showed that he saw nothing of what was before him. In the half-darkness of the gathering storm his face had an appearance almost ghastly ; it seemed unnaturally pale, sallow as though with long-continued anxiety or fear, and there was a hunted look upon it that was startlingly manifest, now that for the first time the watcher saw it unguarded and in repose. All at once his first instinct of friendliness was reinforced by another, hardly less strange, of pity. Together they were strong enough to overcome his reserve. The other boarders had turned away from the



"Watching the scene with an air of quiet attention."



door and could now be heard talking and disputing in the little *salon*. The two Englishmen were alone. Then he spoke, his voice sounding to himself unnatural, and his heart beating quicker than usual; to one of his disposition the incident was already an adventure.

"An ominous evening!"

The man addressed started quite perceptibly at the unexpected voice. He turned, as though seeing the speaker for the first time. "Yes," he answered curtly enough, and with an intonation of annoyance at the interruption to his thoughts. For a moment he looked as though he were about to go back into the house, or out into the rain, rather than repeat the experience. The rebuff would have been complete; the speaker was already beginning to feel it, and to repent his temerity, when something seemed to cause the other suddenly to hesitate. He stopped, glanced at his companion with a look that was less suspicious but strangely inquiring, and even volunteered to continue the conversation. "You know this place well?" he asked, but not, as the first speaker perceived, from a desire for information so much as to gain time in which to scrutinise his companion more narrowly. He could feel the gaze almost as a physical sensation.

"The town or the house?" he asked, his habitual shyness returning to such an extent that he was unable to meet the searching regard that he knew the other had turned upon him, and being answered "Both," launched, a little hurriedly, into a mass of detail and description. Presently he felt the look of the stranger relax in intensity, and venturing to glance timidly at him, met a smile that was at once satisfied and friendly, and even something more, that he could not understand. It encouraged him. He was, for the first time, glad that he had obeyed his impulse and spoken.

After a little while they had become, in a sense, intimate. The first had ended his account of the district, its advantages of cheapness and quiet, "which so few travelling English people seemed to be aware of," judging, at least, by the rarity of their appearance at the Pension Beaurivage. This fact might perhaps stand as his own excuse for obtruding himself in the present instance. If there was also a hint of inquiry in the words, it was disregarded by the other. He was still watching his companion with the same half-amused look, behind which, however, the old defensive air was always present. His manner was a strange mixture of antagonism and interest.

While they talked, the rain had been coming down in a steadily increasing volume, till the air was filled with the smell of wet dust, and the drops beat back from the pavement in a fine spray that began now to threaten the carpet of the little hall. Madame, watching from her office, despatched the one waiter of the Beaurivage with orders to close the glass doors. The two men, interrupted in their conversation, were thus driven within, and stood for a moment disconsolately at the entrance of the lighted *salon*, seeming both of them unwilling to go further. It was this chance that gave to the elder his second inspiration.

"If you would care," he ventured, half surprised at himself even as he said the words, "my own room is at least less noisy than this. We can talk there in peace."

The other, of course, did not know how unusual was the suggestion, coming from such a quarter. He assented easily enough, with that strange air of curiosity that seemed to overlie and veil some emotion entirely different, and the two passed upstairs together. Madame, from her little window, marked the phenomenon, as she marked everything that went forward at the Beaurivage, and her astonishment was almost incredulity. *Enfin!* A friend for the hermit of an Englishman, and one, moreover, of his own making. It was the age of miracles! But for her part—Madame shrugged eloquent shoulders. She had her own mistrusts of M. Blackbeard.

The cell of the hermit was at the top of the house, chosen, indeed, by him on this account for the view commanded by its one small window, whence, with difficulty and some faith, one might detect even a glimpse of open sea between the opposite gables. It was a room very apparent as the sole dwelling-place of its occupant; full of the significant trifles that parody home for him for whom the word in its true sense does not exist. A box in one corner covered with a rug, some framed sketches and a photograph or two on the walls, a tobacco-jar on a small table by the window. It was all comfortable enough, and yet—to one at least of the two men who entered it—horribly pathetic. It was, perhaps, the air of finality which these touches gave to what should have been a transient setting that so affected him. The bearded man, following his host into the room, was struck with a sudden prophetic vision of self-pity. Thus and thus would be his own environment in the life that was before him. He shuddered involuntarily.

The other, however, seemed to have no such misgivings. He ushered in his guest with almost an air of pride, mingled with a little tremor of anxious hospitality. He went fussily about, trimming the lamp and pulling forward the easy-chair, while the younger man stood glancing round him and taking in the details that I have mentioned. He held an unlighted cigar in one hand, and looked grotesquely huge in the tiny room that was still in half-darkness until the lamp could be turned fully up. When this was done, he moved round the walls for a moment or two, examining the pictures and photographs with an air of interest that did not seem to be assumed out of courtesy. The owner of the room was on his knees before the stove, for the rain had caused the evening to become cold. Every now and then he would give, over his shoulder, a short explanation of whatever had attracted the attention of his guest.

"My mother—she has been dead many years," he said of the water-colour of an old lady that hung over the bed. There were other frames containing, most of them, faded photographs of groups taken in India, where it appeared that a considerable part of his life must have been spent. He himself was evident in these, a quite easily recognisable figure, gradually growing older. The stranger had been following them with some murmured phrases of attention, when suddenly the host heard him stop as though arrested by some object of compelling interest. There was so long a pause, while he was expecting an inquiry that did not come, that at last he himself turned to ascertain the reason, and found his guest standing before the only other coloured picture in the room, a crayon sketch of a young boy that occupied alone the wall opposite to the bed. It was roughly drawn by the hand seemingly of an amateur, yet with a certain mastery in the general effect, and especially the expression. It was, indeed, what would have been vaguely called a "speaking" likeness, looking out at the spectator with a gaze in which laughter and courage and the magnificent sincerity of a child were all of them delightfully apparent. The boy whom it represented appeared to be about fifteen years old, and the fashion of his dress was that of some half-century before.

There was silence for still a moment longer, while the elder man seemed to be considering what to say. At last he spoke: "A relic of very long ago," he said in a tone slightly different from any that he had before used. "A boy whom I knew in my schooldays."

The other was still looking at the picture. He had thus his back turned to the speaker as he answered, carelessly enough: "It seems very well drawn."

"I think so," said the first. There was a queer, almost embarrassed, air of constraint upon him as he spoke. Had he not been preoccupied by this, it might have occurred to him to wonder at the effect which the picture had also produced upon the stranger. As it was, however, he noticed nothing. He turned again to the stove, and by the time that he had lighted it and risen from his knees, the bearded man was already seated in one of the two chairs by the window. He himself took the other, which was so turned that he faced the lamp, while his companion was in shadow.

Placed thus, a third observer would have had an excellent opportunity of studying and contrasting the expression of the two faces. The difference in them was indeed much more marked than the small disparity in their ages would have prepared him to find. Put roughly, it was the distinctive result of a life of activity and one of introspection that showed in them both; but there was also more than this. In one some natural nobility of feature had become hardened, made cruel almost; disfigured, moreover, by that look of anxiety mentioned before. All this would have been apparent in the face of the bearded man to one standing beside him, though from his companion he seemed careful to keep it always partly screened by the hand upon which it was bent. The other was different; the face, a little weak perhaps, of a gentle dreamer who had grown old in a world of unrealities. It would have been easy enough to trace both the character and the lives of the two old men, as they sat confronting each other thus beside the open window. Outside, the rain was still falling heavily, and every now and then a pale flare of lightning caused the opposite houses to stand out for an instant in vivid relief against the sky.

Suddenly the stranger broke the silence that had fallen between them with an unexpected question.

"About that picture," he said abruptly. "Will you tell me more of it?"

For a moment the other looked startled. It was disconcerting that the words should chime so with his thoughts, which had themselves wandered away to the associations which the mention of the picture had called up. He hesitated, feeling that his guest was again watching him with renewed curiosity, and uneasily conscious that the explanation

for which he was asked might not be of a kind that the other could at all understand.

"There is hardly anything to tell," he answered evasively after a moment. "It is simply a friend whom I knew once, and admired, a great number of years ago. When I was almost of the same age, indeed. That"—he smiled slightly—"is a long time."

"And you have kept it ever since?" The stranger seemed, for some reason, oddly interested in this reminiscence of the other's youth.

"Very nearly. The picture is not quite contemporary with my knowledge of the subject. It fell into my hands, by accident, some thirty years ago. It was done by a man who was drawing-master at the school at which my friend and I were pupils. At a sale after his death I happened to notice the sketch and bought it. That is all."

His tone seemed to dismiss the subject, but the other did not obey it.

"One more question," he persisted (he was still shielding his face with his hand as he spoke). "Forgive my curiosity. Why?"

Again the elder man hesitated, seeming to struggle with himself. What was there in the picture to rouse such concern in one who had not his memories of it? "There is really no reason why I should not tell you," he said slowly, "except a fear of having to show myself foolish about what may seem a very trivial matter. That alone would certainly be enough to keep me from speaking of it to anyone else, but with you somehow I have unaccountably the feeling that this is different, that you will understand. I keep that picture, then, not only because it recalls to me the face of a friend—whom, after all, I only knew very slightly, and that a great while ago—but because it serves also to keep alive in my mind the memory of an ideal."

"Yes?" The other was perhaps careful that no surprise should be perceptible in his voice. "You mean——"

"I mean that, child as he was, the boy whose picture is on that wall had already done, to my certain knowledge, the finest and most beautiful action that I have ever heard of in my life. It was an act (involving, amongst other things, the bearing of undeserved blame for a long time) that to those who did not know him would appear now almost incredible, or, at best, the work of an inhuman prig. It was that really that made it so wonderful. The boy was some years my junior, but his popularity and skill at games had made him one of the leaders

in a society where I, for lack of these very attributes, was nobody. Well, all this I know him to have endangered thoughtfully, deliberately, at the mere bidding of his own sense of honour, and for the safety of one whom he hardly knew, and for whom he could have had no feeling of affection. There need be no more mystery about it. That other was myself. Do you still wonder that I keep the picture?"

Instead of replying, the listener parried with yet another question. "And afterwards," he asked, "you became friends?"

"Hardly that, perhaps. The affair only happened in my last term at school, and I did not learn the truth till afterwards, when I was already abroad. I wrote to him, of course, and for a year or two we corresponded intermittently, till the letters gradually ceased on his side. That was in the year in which I definitely took up my work in India. It was on my first home-leave that I chanced upon that picture. I might, of course, have brought myself into touch with him then, but I hesitated, and the opportunity passed. I was never, perhaps"—he smiled again deprecatingly—"a very confident person. Anyhow, I went back to India without having seen or heard of him. But the picture went also. It has never left me."

He paused, as though half expecting the stranger to make some comment; but the other sat silent, and after a moment the old man continued.

"If I do not speak of this—and you are the first who has ever heard the story—it is because so few would even begin to understand it. Perhaps to no one could I ever make clear just what that picture is now to me. It, and the associations which it conveys, have become—how can I explain?—almost a part of my religion, because it is for me a visible symbol of what one is in danger so often of forgetting and disbelieving. Courage and chivalry and truth, all that is bound up in the idea of honour at its finest—it is no small service surely to keep alive one's faith in these!" His voice trembled a little. Now that the first surprise was past, it seemed no longer strange to him to be speaking in this way to one of whom he knew nothing. "I called it a part of my religion. Can you understand how, in all these years, it has come to be almost the whole; for I believe in the original of that picture as I believe in nothing else in the world?"

There was again a silence after the last words. The talk, so hesitating and desultory

in its beginnings, seemed suddenly to have taken an unexpected turn. It was hard to tell what the stranger thought of it all. He sat very still in the shadow; his voice, in the few words that he had uttered, was so carefully under control as to betray nothing. The old man's face, however, was lit up with enthusiasm; he seemed twenty years younger, and there was almost worship in the look that he turned now towards the picture on the wall. But suddenly he seemed conscious of a meaning in the other's silence. "You think me mad to talk like this?" he said. "Perhaps it is true. Most of the people here

"If that were possible," he said very simply, "it would be to me now something much worse than death. But it is not." It was the unreasoning belief of a fanatic that gave the answer. Watching his face as he spoke, one saw that, on one theme at least, the suspicion as to his mental balance was not without excuse. The long years of solitary brooding had left their mark. Perhaps he himself was, for his knowledge of this, the more careful to choose his words as he continued: "I am telling you what is merely the truth when I say that I had rather die, keeping my belief in him, than live without



"For a long moment there was absolute silence in the room."

are convinced of it"—whimsically—"though they have less excuse than you. How do I know if they are not right? Solitude and memory can play anyone queer tricks, and they are all I have now. That picture has really been my only companion in all the last part of my life—I forget sometimes that it is not a living one. If I were to part from it, I almost believe that I should die."

"Or if your faith in the original were to be broken?" There was for the first time a note of mockery, the suggestion of a sneer, in the careful voice. But the old man did not heed it.

it, because afterwards I should be afraid. But I think that my faith could hardly be shaken now, even if he were to come himself to make the attempt."

For a moment the other glanced suspiciously at him, but there was nothing to fear in the expression of the weak, gentle old face. All at once he broke out into impatience.

"This is the greatest nonsense I ever listened to!" he cried suddenly—"this belief, as you call it, in one who may have been dead twenty years. It is nothing but madness!"

The unexpected brutality of the speech startled the old man. He sat staring at his guest in amazement.

"Besides," went on the other, with no less heat, "it isn't human or even commonly fair—this absurd idol that you have set up. What experience have you, on your own showing, of the conditions of his life? None. And yet you sit here in security, out of the way of it all, and demand for him a standard of sentimental perfection that in the real world wouldn't be possible for a day. Can't you see how utterly unreasonable it all is?"

He seemed himself beyond reason vehement, as though repelling some unspoken accusation. Then more quietly he added: "And, again—all this vain talk about honour; surely that is only a relative term. How can one man judge how far another has failed in it? Honour is just doing the best one can—for others, of course, but for oneself first."

"That is not quite how he regarded it," said the old man wistfully.

"Oh—he!" retorted the other, with impatience. "Can you not understand that I am speaking now of real men in the actual world. Tell me," he asked, "do you know anything at all of what goes on there? This affair, for instance"—a queer nervousness had all at once come into his voice—"of Holland's Bank. The English papers are full of it. Take that as an example."

He did not look, but he knew that the old man's expression changed as he continued—

"In such a case as that. This fellow Holland—he has fled now, the papers say—got off somewhere with the wreck of his own fortune. But hundreds will, no doubt, have nothing. Remember"—he was speaking eagerly, almost passionately—"he did his best, nobody doubts that; it wasn't a fraudulent concern in the beginning. He fought, I dare say, struggled, and hoped against despair for years that he

would be able to put things straight. But luck was against him; and now—he's given up. There are others dependent on him, too—hasn't he the right to consider those before the outside crowd, amongst whom what he has saved would be only like a drop of water spilt on a desert? Well, what would your precious honour say to that?"

He stopped and for the first time stole a glance at his companion. There was defiance in it—or, rather, a kind of angry appeal. But the old man did not notice.

"His name was Holland," he said, speaking as though to himself, "Seymour Holland." He pronounced it softly, almost reverently. Then, quite without any warning, he raised his eyes and looked straight into those of the stranger.

"Are you he?" he asked.

"Yes," said the other. He dropped his head upon his arms, which were outstretched upon the table. For a long moment there was absolute silence in the room.

\* \* \* \* \*

Afterwards, years afterwards, when the whole business of the bank, and the trial and acquittal of Holland himself, had begun to be forgotten, it was still a mystery to many persons why, on the high road to escape, he should voluntarily have returned and faced the investigation. Rightly, a great point was made of this by counsel at the trial; it had, without doubt, its effect in determining the verdict. Perhaps, however, those who wondered would have understood better if they could have read a passage in a letter from the accused, in which, after describing his meeting with what he calls "that old madman," he alludes to his own projected flight, and ends with the words: "It turned out, after all, to be just one of those things that one finds oneself incapable of doing."

## THE LAST PRACTICE.

**T**HE slim boat in the sun a gleam  
Is turned by slow, alternate oars:  
Then loftily up the grey stream  
She sweeps as some strong eagle soars!

And, oh, those eight blue blades assail  
Old hearts unschooled to beat by rote,  
And like wild music they prevail  
To raise a lump within the throat,

And dim tired eyes with visions sped  
Of youth and all it held in view,  
And with kind pride that, spite our dead,  
Gladdens at what we still can do!

VICTOR PLARR.

# THE COMPLEAT HOUSEWIFE.

## THE STORY OF A BATTAGLIO PIE.

By CLOTILDE GRAVES.



SO many male members of the British aristocracy find their feminine complements in American social circles, that I guess I won't astonish anyone that reads this when I announce myself, *née* Lydia

Randolph, of Savannah—described in Glatt's "Guide to the United States" as "the chief city and commercial metropolis of Georgia"—as a slip of Southern wild orange grafted by marriage upon one of the three-hundred-year-old citron trees that are the pride of the greenhouses at Hindsway Abbey, Deershire.

Bryan—my husband is Sir Bryan Corbryan, sixteenth Baronet of that name—was travelling in the Southern States when we met at the Jasper House at Thunderbolt, a fashionable early summer resort on the Warsow River. I had seen clean-made, springy, red-and-white, handsome Englishmen before, but there was something particularly distinguished about this one, or it seemed so. We were neighbours at the *table d'hôte*, and Sir Bryan had no idea how to eat green corn until I gave him an object-lesson, and was wonderfully ignorant about simple things like fried egg-plant. Chicken gumbo reminded him of Indian curries, and he thought our green oysters as good as those of Ostend, but he drew the line at raw canvas-back and roast ices. We became so friendly over the *carte de jour* that Mamie—my second sister—parodied the old rhyme about love—

"Oh, 'tis food, 'tis food, 'tis food  
That makes the world go round!"

she sang, as we moved towards the ladies' drawing-room.

"Grow round, you mean," said I scornfully, as the elevator carried us upwards, and the coloured boy grinned.

"After all," said Mamie thoughtfully—she is considered a very brainy girl by her school professors—"without food there would

be no love. People would just pine and dwindle and die. Wouldn't they, Belvidere?"

"Iss, missus," said the lift-boy, catching and biting the quarter Mamie tossed him.

Well, next day we met Sir Bryan again. After that it was usually me. We all greatly enjoyed that June holiday in our differing ways. Marma simply drank in the restfulness of a hotel with three or four hundred guests in it, after the harassing worries of a household consisting of a husband, three daughters, and seven servants, and rocked and fanned from morning until night. For us young folks there were drives, fishing parties, walking excursions, and bathing sociables. My! the time flew. But the world stood still quite suddenly, or seemed to, when Sir Bryan asked me to be his wife. He said I was the loveliest girl on the Salts or the face of Creation, and he just burned with longing to carry me home as his bride to Deershire, and walk with me under the Tudor oaks he had told me about. Tudor oaks! And a girl whose father was making a corner in cotton on Bay Street at that very moment! But Sir Bryan appeared to see no discrepancy, and that corner in cotton made me quite an heiress, as it afterwards turned out.

Well, our wedding—Bryan's and mine—was solemnised at the Savannah Episcopal Church, fronting Madison Square. It was a jessamine and tuberoses wedding, cartloads of those blooms being employed. I had privately begged Bryan to send home for the first baronet's gold inlaid suit of tilting armour to be married in; but he begged to be excused, as wrought steel is such heavy summer-wear. Otherwise, he thought, considering the almost Presidential amount of handshaking a bridegroom usually has to go through, gauntlets would be rather an advantage than otherwise.

We spent a June week of our honeymoon trip at Newport and one on the ocean, and two in that Eden of the modern Adam and Eve, Paris, and then we went home to Deershire and Hindsway Abbey, driving the whole way from the station under festoons



of parti-coloured flags, while the bells rang peals of welcome, and school-children and tenants cheered, and the guard of honour voted by the Deershire Mounted Volunteers kept up a deafening clatter behind that made the spirited horses more spirited still ; and then we turned in between old stone entrance gate-pillars crested with heraldic monsters like those on Bryan's coat-of-arms, and drove along the wide avenue under those Tudor oaks Bryan had talked about, and the Abbey, a glorious old building of ancient red brick faced with white stone, rose up before us, girt with its ancient terraced walks and clipped hedges of yew and holly, and smothered in roses and wistaria to its mossy tiled roofs and the very tips of its twisted chimneys.

"Oh," I cried to Bryan, "never tell *me* that gentlemen in trunks and ladies in farthingales, or *beaux* in powdered periwigs and laced brocade coats, and *belles* in hoops and furbelows don't promenade here in the witching hours of night under the glimpses of the waning moon, because I simply shan't believe you !"

"So you like it ?" said my husband, looking pleased and proud.

"Like it !" was all I could say ; but it seemed enough for Bryan. He took my hand and led me into our home, and the red light of the great wood fire upon the gleaming hearth-dogs of the old wainscoted hall shone upon two very happy people.

Then—I just hate to think of it !—hard upon all the cheering and curtsying and welcoming came the blue-enveloped cablegram from Marma, with its brief, sharp, clearly worded message of misfortune. Parpa had had a spell of hemiplegia in consequence of a slump in lumber, which he had tided through, poor dear, at the expense of his health. I cried and begged to go back to the States at any risk, but Bryan was firm. I could see that if I had owned three fathers, all lying in imminent peril, it would have been just the same. *He* would go, he declared, in my place. Parpa had two daughters on the spot, and a son ought to be an appreciated change.

I loathed to let him go, but I loved him for wanting to. I put my head right down on his dear tweed shoulder and told him so. He lifted up my face and kissed it.

"You'll be brave, little woman"—I am five feet eight—"and Phee, I know you will take care of your mistress ?" he said, looking hard at my coloured maid.

"Bless grashus, Marsa, co'se I will !" said Phee, with a wide, brilliant smile.

And within two hours my husband had driven from the door of his ancestral dwelling, and I was a grass widow. I made this observation to Phee.

"Lor', honey," said she, "ain' dat heaps better dan bein' de real kin' ?"

I had not regarded the situation previously from this point of view, and I could not deny that Phee was in the right. But I cried myself to sleep all the same, and woke feeling pretty cheerful, and when I had bathed and dressed and breakfasted in the morning-room that looked upon the quaintest of old-world gardens bounded with rose-hedges and centred with a splendid four-faced dial, lifted aloft upon a twisted and carved pillar, adorned with the motto, *Nunc sol nunc umbra*, I received a respectful message from Mrs. Pounds, the housekeeper, asking for an audience.

She was a handsome old lady in a lace cap and rustling black silk gown, and when she had handed me a bunch of keys similar to the bunch that dangled at her waist, she launched into many revelations concerning household affairs, to which I fear I listened absently, being mentally absorbed upon the question of the arrival or non-arrival of Bryan's letter. Joy ! a guardedly expressed but distinctly affectionate telegram was handed to me before Mrs. Pounds had got through. Bryan had engaged a deck cabin on the biggest of the Atlantic ferries, and would steam out of Southampton Docks precisely at two p.m. A letter was following. Dear telegram ! Dear letter ! Dearest Bryan ! My eyes swam with tears. Oh, how I meant to try to be an ideal wife ! How I——

"It being a rainy morning, and unpleasant for walking or driving," I heard Mrs. Pounds say, "and the Abbey being one of the most interesting Tudor residences in the County, perhaps her Ladyship would wish to go over the house ?"

The notion was invigorating.

"Why, certainly !" I exclaimed. "I should just adore to !"

"If her Ladyship permits," said Mrs. Pounds, with refrigerating stateliness, "I will act as her Ladyship's guide !"

I thanked her and rang for Phee.

"Did her Ladyship wish the young black person to attend her ?" Mrs. Pounds inquired, with a perfectly glacial stiffness.

"I guess so," I said ; "since she is to live in this house, she may as well learn her way about it—the sooner, the better."

"As her Ladyship pleases," said Mrs. Pounds, and unhooked her bunch of keys with a shiver of virtuous resignation. Then she said that if her Ladyship permitted, she would lead the way, and glided out of the morning-room.

What a refined and subtle pleasure there lies in going over every nook and corner of a noble, ancient house, in traversing the echoing galleries, looking from the mullioned windows upon garden, terrace, alley, pleasure-ground, and park; in gazing at ancient pictures painted by inspired hands long since dust, in fingering antique china and glorious old tapestries, tapping ringing corselets and engraven helms, touching gleaming or rusty weapons, looking respectfully on chairs that have upheld historical personages, and carved, canopied beds in which they have slept! That pleasure was to me intensified a thousandfold because the house was Bryan's and mine.

Phoebe was as enthusiastic in her way as I was, though my way was less ebullient. Her vociferations of "Lordy! Lawd sakes! Bless grashus!" with other kindred ejaculations, seemed to pain Mrs. Pounds a good deal. But presently that rustling embodiment of respectability threw open a door on the first floor landing of what she termed the West Wing, saying:—

"This is called Lady Deborah's room, which, although carefully kept free from dust, as her Ladyship sees, has never been occupied since the death of Lady Deborah, which occurred of quinsy in the reign of King George the Second, and the lifetime of the tenth Baronet, her son. The portrait in oils by Jongman, set in panel over the chimney-piece, is considered to be a speaking likeness. Her Ladyship is wearing the very cap and gown in which she is said to haunt this house, and that book that lies upon the escritoire in the window is the identical volume she is said to carry in her hand."

"Fo' de Lawd!" I heard Phoebe say gutturally behind me.

As for myself, I felt no chill of awe. The triumph of being the mistress of an undeniably ancient, undoubtedly ghost-haunted abbey fired my blood and thrilled my whole being. I advanced to the escritoire, an ancient, brass-handled piece of furniture with flowers in Dutch marquetry, and opened the book—a dilapidated volume in brown leather binding—at the title-page. "The Compleat Housewife," I read, "or Accomplished Gentlewoman's Companion. A Collection of Prov'd Receipts in Cookery and Confection-

ary, With Instructions for the Making of Wines and Cordials, Also Above 200 Family Specificks, viz. Drinks, Syrups, Salves, Ointments and Cures For Varyous Distempers. By Eliz. Smith: The Second Edycion. London: Printed for J. Pynkerton agaynst S<sup>t</sup> Dunstan's Church in Fleet street, in the Reign of His Ma<sup>ty</sup> King George II."

Phoebe had backed nervously into the corridor. With the book in my hand, I glanced a friendly adieu towards the portrait of Lady Deborah, whose mob-cap and black silk calash encircled a wrinkled yet pleasant and placid countenance, embellished with the fine streakings of rosy red one sees on a good eating-apple, and ornamented by huge round spectacles rimmed with silver.

"Thank you," I said to the housekeeper, "but I think I have seen enough for one while. So many stairs are fatiguing to a person accustomed to elevators."

"Her Ladyship means lifts?" said Mrs. Pounds, making allowances for the foreigner.

"Not at all," I said. "But I guess you mean elevators." The stout brown leather volume under my arm inspired me to ask a question: "With regard to Lady Deborah, Mrs. Pounds, you will not think it a very odd question if I ask you, Have you ever seen her?"

"I will not deceive her Ladyship," said the housekeeper. "There have been alarms among the maids, and reports circulated by guests long, long before my time, and in my time, but never having viewed the apparition myself, I never gave such credit for an instant. Ghostly hauntings argue unquiet consciences, I have always understood; and what should a virtuous, housekeeping lady, such as Lady Deborah was, by all accounts—and the almshouses she built and endowed—are the pride of the village to this day!—have upon her conscience? Her still-room is in the wing, though now turned into a store-room; and my jams, not to say jellies, are made after recipes in ancient writing which I believe to have been hers."

"And this must have been the cookery-book out of which she copied them," said I, glancing into the well-thumbed volume, "which I am going to carry away and look over."

"Oh, my—my lady!" exclaimed Mrs. Pounds, paling slightly and forgetting the third person in her perturbation. "I beg your Ladyship's pardon, but your Ladyship had best not. They do say——"

"Ah! what do they say?" I asked

"They say," said Mrs. Pounds, nervously

smoothing her muslin apron, "that whenever or however that book is removed from this room, it is always found in its place upon Lady Deborah's escritoire next morning. Which would argue, my lady, that she fetches it back herself."

My southern blood ran less warmly through my veins, but I held my head up bravely.

"Has anyone put that tradition to the test, to your knowledge?" I asked.

Mrs. Pounds pursed her lips and shook her head.

"Very well!" I said in my stateliest manner, and I swept down the corridor, whose ancient oaken planking creaked under my high-heeled French shoes.

It still rained. Two huge fires of apple-wood burned in my great panelled drawing-room, where tall, carved cabinets of Indian ebony, Dutch marquetry, and Chinese lacquer, crowned with lovely vases and bowls of Oriental pottery, stood sentinel on the edges of the worn but beautiful Turkey carpet. I sank into a low, deep chair near the lower hearth-place and stared up at the carvings over the bossed mantelshelf, representing Dante and Beatrice, and other personages from the "*Divina Commedia*," all wearing Elizabethan ruffs, trunk hose and farthingales. The rain splashed from the leaden mouths of the lion-headed water-pipes upon the flags of the terrace. It sounded like the tap-tapping of high-heeled brodequins. There was a high-backed, narrow, black oak chair on the opposite edge of the rug, an armless, stiff, uncomfortable chair, and upholstered in gilded leather—or leather that had once been gilded, fastened on with gilt nails, or nails that were once gilt, driven through little round pieces of faded green and red felt. There are articles of furniture that irresistibly evoke in the mind fancy portraits of the people who must have owned them. As I looked at that chair, its outlines became obscure. . . . Gradually enormously hooped petticoats of strong, flowered brocade, green with a shrimp-pink pattern of roses, came into view, from the border of which peeped the ends of narrow, square-toed shoes adorned with silver buckles. Languidly and without surprise my eyes travelled from these upwards to the cobweb-lace border of a very fine Swiss—I should say muslin—apron. In the centre of the apron were a pair of withered hands adorned with antique jewelled rings, and covered to the bony knuckles with black silk mittens. I followed the mittens to the lace ruffles of the sleeves, which matched the cinnamon satin peaked bodice—so tightly

laced that one could hardly credit a human body being inside—trimmed with heavy silver lace and having puffed *paniers* on either side. The neck of the bodice was cut square and filled in with soft folds of muslin, and about a withered throat I caught the gleam of a gold and amber necklace. The body I have described ended in the face I had expected. The peaked chin, the pursed-up lips, the withered rose-apple cheeks, slightly pinched nose, and huge silver-rimmed spectacles—all belonged to Lady Deborah's portrait. Almost with gladness I recognised the rolled-up, powdered hair, crowned with the enormous, lappeted mob-cap. It affected me strangely that the old lady did not wear the black silk calash or bonnet, but carried it slung over her thin arm by its wide strings, and that a tortoiseshell-headed cane not represented upon the canvas—a kit-kat—leaned against a little Indian cabinet of striped calamander wood which stood near.

Bryan's family ghost—mine, by virtue of my rights as Bryan's wife! The cold chills and crisping sensations of fear were banished by the pleasant glow of pride which stole over my being as I gazed upon the dear old lady! I had so much regretted Bryan's not having any mother or pleasant elderly women relatives living for me to be cosy and confidential with—and here was one! Not living, but still visible; not to be felt, perhaps, but possibly to be heard. All this while Lady Deborah stared piercingly in my direction. She was not looking at me, but at the open book upon my knee, which had nearly slipped off it, and just as I had made up my mind to venture on a very delicate cough, she spoke, in a dry, rasping old voice—

"Child, if you thought to persuade me you was asleep, you may spare yourself the trouble, for I have seen your eyelids blink these dozen times."

"Oh, Lady Deborah——" I began, but the old lady caught up her cane and rapped me over the knuckles—hard, with the end of it!

"Is that the way you give greeting to your elders, Mistress Impertinence?" she cried shrilly. "Truly, I don't know where the young women are coming to! Dry your eyes, chit!"—they were watering from the smart of my rapped knuckles—"and let me see you make a proper reverence!"

Her cane was hovering. I hastily got out of my chair and made the lowest cotillon-curtsey I had ever achieved.

"Pish!" ejaculated the Lady Deborah Corbryan, with perfectly withering contempt. She waved me aside and rose to her feet.



"Bryan's family ghost—mine, by virtue of my rights as Bryan's wife!"

"Fold the arms, thus : cross the legs at the knees ; bend them outwards, sink—and recover." She sank as though the floor had opened under her, she recovered—apparently upon the point of vanishing. "Madam," she said, with an agreeable smile which revealed a set of boxwood teeth strung on gold wire, "I vow I am vastly happy to see your Ladyship, and venture to hope that your Ladyship enjoys good health ?"

"Perfectly, thank you. And—dear Lady Deborah, you can't begin to know how real glad I am to see you. I was just expiring to have you drop in !" I stopped, for the old lady's eyes were beginning to snap behind her spectacles.

"Drop in," she said severely, "is not a seemly expression for a young woman. But be seated, child, and tell me your name. . . . Lydia Randolph, of Georgia, d'ye say ? My young descendant was travelling in the East, I presume, when he encountered you ? I hoped, for the honour of the Corbryans, you was a relative of the Grand Turk, or of the Sophy, at least, for our family is very ancient and honourable, let me tell you !"

After an effort or two I gave up the task of trying to persuade Lady Deborah that the State of Georgia was located in America, which she persisted in calling "the Virginias." She was aware that a person named Smith had devoted his life to the exploration and colonisation of New England, and that the English, in 1664, had held possession of New York. She approved of those commodities which came from my country, American rum, cane sugar, coffee, and tobacco, and helped herself to snuff from an amethyst-topped box as she approved.

"My young descendant will take you up to London in the family coach when he returns (I had explained why I figured as a lonely bride), and initiate you into the pleasures of the gay world of fashion," she said. "You must see Mr. Garrick in 'Hamlet,' the dear, ingenious man ! and Mrs. Siddons as Belvidera—Lud ! how she frightened me in her frenzy. And Mr. Johnson—you must see that great, if uncouth, personage—and Mr. Reynolds, the painter—he must be prevailed upon to paint you, for you are not ill-looking, chit, and would be positively handsome were you dressed. Dear me, what junketings I had in my time ! . . . Ranelagh, Hampstead, Vauxhall, Marybone Gardens and Totnam Farm . . . where we went for syllabubs new from the cow—and the *beaux* quarrelled

among them which should have the glass I had drunk out of. For I was a toast and a beauty, and a sad coquette, too, my dear !" said the old lady, complacently nodding her great cap. "Sir George Cockerell, of Bangwood—a mon'sous rake—tried to carry me off from Bath Wells in a coach with four, in broad day ; for which Sir Bryan ran him through, my dear, under the second rib on the left side—and—'You've nicked it, Corbryan,' says Sir George, 'and—and I lose it—but I don't apologise,' and swooned away. And D'Arcy D'Urfée writ a poem upon a pair of fringed gloves I wore at an assembly, and my Lord Chesterfield himself hath paid me compliments. But beauty is a passing flower, child, and so I found it when I took the smallpox and rose from my bed—hung with scarlet cloth, by orders of His Majesty's own physician—to find my face all pitted and my beautiful eyebrows and lashes gone—to a hair."

"Oh, how dreadful !" I cried. "And—and Sir Bryan ?"

"Sir Bryan took to the claret bottle in his sorrow, and to the punch-bowl," said Lady Deborah.

"Drank !" I cried. "Oh ! how dreadful !"

"Tush, child !" snapped the old lady. "Don't all our men drink ? And our women, too, for that matter ! Liquor was made for man, we have the authority of the Ancients upon it ! But Sir Bryan took to other things as well—gaming at the Grecian and White's, and other follies—and I was a very unhappy woman for a time. Then I found comfort, chit—in a book with which you are acquainted !"

"The Scriptures, madam ?" I said, my lips trembling with sympathy and admiration of the simple piety of the poor, deserted wife.

"My dear mother's Cookery Book. You have it in your lap, child, and by constant study of it I became the most notable housewife in my county . . . Let me trust you have read and pondered its pages," said Lady Deborah, nodding solemnly. "'Tis as unseemly for a young lady to enter the world without a knowledge of the art of carving, for instance, as to appear at a ball without her sacque and paniers and hooped petticoat. Thou canst unjoint a bittern, I trust ; souse a capon, unlace a crane, dismember a heron, lift a swan, and rear a bustard with elegance and discretion ?"

"I—I am afraid not," I stammered, keeping the tears back with difficulty as I

realised my ignorance of English social customs. "You see, Parpa wished me to be educated in the State where I was raised, and this is my first visit to England. Possibly I could souse a capon, but swans are such vicious things, I should never dare to lift one. And as to rearing a bustard, I've never seen one yet."

"Lydia, I vow you horrify me! No more, child, or I shall have a fit of the spleen!" Lady Deborah fanned herself with the cunningest tortoiseshell fan, and sniffed at a silver apple pricked full of holes that hung from her *châtelaine*. "I shall have to take a dram of gentian wine or carduus-seeds bruised in old sack," she added. "Either is sovereign, both for spleen and the vapours. Remember that, should you happen to be attacked by these distempers."

"I'm sure I hope I shan't be," said I fervently.

"Rue-water is also excellent in fits," said the old lady loftily. "My rue-water was justly celebrated. I distributed it on Thursdays to all the poor who chose to bring bottles to contain it. The juice of the plant distilled, and mingled in the strongest brown ale, a gallon and a half to a pint. 'Twas extraordinary much sought by the labourers on Sir Bryan's estate. Even more eagerly begged for and carried away was my Palsy and Surfeit Water, composed of the juice of poppies, mint, cloves, and coriander seeds, mingled with crushed loaf-sugar and the best French brandy."

"I guess so!" I said.

"Did you suffer from dropsy, child, or gout," said Lady Deborah, "you would find in that volume the absolute specific."

I said I was afraid I had never had either.

"Consumption, then, or sore throat?" said Bryan's ancestress anxiously.

I had had sore throat, and allowed as much.

"For sore throat, an excellent water is made of a peck of snails laid in hyssop, bruised and distilled in new milk," said Lady Deborah, "and drunk fasting. By discreet use of this cordial any sore throat can be cured."

"Why, of course," said I. "The mere thought of the snails would effect the cure. One would get well directly—at least, I should."

"Then in the treatment of jaundice. I have worked absolute wonders, child, with conserve of prepared earthworms, turmeric, and rhubarb, mixed. The complaint lies before it, positively," continued Lady Deborah.

"Or the patient does," I said to myself, but inwardly, remembering the cane.

"You never was bit by a mad dog, was you, chit?" was the astonishing question that came next.

"Good gracious, no!" I exclaimed energetically.

"Because sage, garlic, treacle, and tinfilings boiled in a quart of strong mead or clary will serve in this disorder," said Lady Deborah. "You pour it into the party bitten by a quarter of a pint at a time."

"I should never pour it," I said decidedly. "I should be too scared the party would bite *me*, and then there'd be two of us, foaming and acting awful!"

"But supposing you was pitted after a bout of smallpox, and desired to efface the scars," continued Lady Deborah, just as though I had not spoken, "you would find on the hundredth page the worthy Dr. Burgess's recipe for a salve, of oil of tartar, pounded docks and green goose fat, considered infallible." She sighed meditatively.

"Did you——?" I hinted, as delicately as I could.

"The ingredients must be mingled at the time of the new moon, when Venus is in the ascendant, and Jupiter is an evening star. I fear, chit," she sighed, "that my knowledge of astronomy was faulty. So little result I obtained that for a while I was plunged in despair."

"I'm real sorry, dear Lady Deborah!" I said gently.

"But I despaired not long," resumed Bryan's ancestress. "I shut myself in my still-room and kitchen—not to weep and lament, but to work. I had ceased to be the queen of my husband's heart, but I learned to be the goddess of his table. Men are stomach first, child, and heart afterwards. What man would not lose a lover to gain so accomplished a cook as I became?" Her lean, narrow figure dilated, her expanding hoops seemed to fill the room, her keen, grey eyes flamed like burning knots of lightwood behind her glasses. "My fame was sounded throughout the County. 'Lady Deb's battaglio pie,' the bloods toasted now, instead of Lady Deb's skin of cream and roses, and Lady Deb's *salmigondin*; her patty royal, her cock salmon with buttered lobster, and her fansy fritters, they raved upon, instead of her bright eyes, red lips, pearly teeth, and clustered hair. And I bore it, chit! and curtsied and thanked 'em kindly, though I wished the dishes might surfeit 'em, with all my heart!"



"Oh, poor Lady Deborah!" I said, my heart in my voice.

"I blame them not now." She lifted her lean hand. "There are no men that love not good eating and drinking—even the saints, that denied themselves; and for the women—I'm one of 'em myself, chit, or was—and know whether they sip nectar from blossoms, as they would have the silly men believe, or have at the cold chine and apple-tart in the buttery on the sly, an hour before the dinner-bell."

She fanned herself, and producing from a deep, swinging pocket a thin, black bone rod with a little hand carved at the end, put it to its definite purpose with an energy that made me shiver. William Blake drew the ghost of a flea, I remembered, as Lady Deborah pocketed the little black rod again.

"Please go on, madam. . . . You interested me so much about Sir Bryan. Did he reform, and become a real devoted husband again?" I asked timidly.

"I tell thee, Lyddy—they call you Lyddy for short, don't they?" resumed Lady Deborah—"he was mine from his shoe-buckle to his wig-bag. He worshipped the tiles of my kitchen—blue and white Dutch, and of a pretty fancy. He took glory to himself in the envy of other men; fox-hunting lords and squires, fat-jowled justices of the peace, doctors of divinity, and doctors of law. He never wearied to his dying day of the triumphs of my cookery, especially roasted sucking-pig stuffed with farced chestnuts, and battaglio pie."

"I guess that's good, anyhow!" I said. "It sounds so."

"'Tis made of young chickens, squab pigeons, quails, partridges, and larks," said the ghost of Lady Deborah, drying a shadowy tear. "You truss them, put them in your dish lined with rich paste, add sweetbreads, cockscombs, a quart of oysters, sliced sheeps' tongues, the marrow of a dozen bones, cloves, mace, nutmegs, the yolks of hard eggs, and forced-meat balls. . . . Cover with butter, pour in a pint of cream, and draw the paste over the pie. When done——"

"It's soon done, I guess," said I, for the recital made me feel quite hungry. "My! it must have been rich!"

"That is why I was left a widow, my dear," said the poor old ghost of Lady Deborah, applying the ghost of a lace pocket-handkerchief—darned—to her eyes.

"Through—through a battaglio pie?" I gasped, appalled by the savour of tragedy that rose from the dish.

"Through a battaglio pie. Mr. Pope made use of the incident in his '*Moral Essays*,'" said Lady Deborah, "where 'tis a jowl of salmon, and not a pie. Alas, yes! Odious as it sounds, I was the cause of my Bryan's too early end. Year by year he had, thanks to the perfection of my cookery, become more and more addicted to the pleasures of the table. . . . Racing, gaming, hunting, had become in his eyes the mere means to gain the appetite for fresh enjoyment. His fine complexion had become a dusky red, his chiselled features swelled, his eyes retired behind cushions of fat, his waist vanished, and three chins depended upon his laced cravat."

"Oh!" I cried in horror.

"He drank hugely, but his drinking was moderate in proportion to his eating," said Sir Bryan's widow. "Too well I remember the odious event. . . . 'Twas his name-day; he had five boon companions join him at the table; I put forth all my powers fitly to celebrate the anniversary. There could not be a prettier supper than that my husband sat to—not if I was to die this minute—I crave pardon, dear Lydia, for forgetting that I am dead! The first course was roasted pike and smelts—being June, pike was in season. Westphalia ham and young fowls, marrow puddings, haunch of venison roasted, ragout of lamb, sweetbreads, fricassee of young rabbits, umbles, a dish of mullets, roasted ducks, and custards."

"And six men sat down to a supper like that?" I said, feeling my eyes opening to their widest extent.

"Nay, child, that was only the first course," said Lady Deborah, sniffing at her silver pomander. "The second course was a dish of young pheasants, a dish of soles and eels, a potato-salad, a jowl of sturgeon, a dish of tarts and cheese-cakes, a rock of snow with syllabubs, and that fatal, that ever-to-be-regretted battaglio pie!" She wiped her eyes and fanned herself. "'Twas the crown of the banquet. . . . Sir Bryan and his guests called for a fresh magnum of claret when it appeared. . . . 'Gentlemen and boon companions,' said he, with the drops of perspiration standing on his purple forehead, and his wig pushed back—I can see it now, for I was peeping through the old buttery dish-slide the servants scarce ever used—'Gentlemen, here's another bumper to the health of Lady Deborah Corbryan, the best wife and the best cook in the Four Kingdoms!' And the gentlemen tossed down the wine, child, but they were full to the throats,



“‘Death and fire!’ says he, ‘you’ve won your money!’ and fell.”

Justice Sir Barnwell Plumtree and Sir George Cockerell (for he and Bryan became great friends in later years), Nainby Friswell and Mr. Selwyn, and Colonel Sir Harry Firebrace of the King's Dragoons. They could only look and water at the chops as my dear Sir Bryan cut into the battaglio pie. He cleared a platter and wiped up the gravy with crust. 'Do ye check?' says he in scorn of the others. 'Do ye balk at the best dish in Christendom? I've supped already, but I wager ye a guinea to a tester all round that I finish the dish!' They took the bet, child, and Sir Bryan put ladle to dish. The ladle dropped with a clatter . . . a surge of blackish purple rose from his chins to his crown. . . . 'Death and fire!' says he, 'you've won your money!' and fell, and never uttered word again until he had been blooded by three chirurgeons one after the other, and had had the actual cautery applied. Oh, my dear! Then he came to himself, and 'Is that thou, Deb?' says he. 'I always loved thee, lass! Tell me the truth now, do I live or die?' And the doctor shook his head. 'No hope?' says Sir Bryan. 'Why, then, I'll e'en die as I have lived. Bring me the dish here—I'll e'en finish the rest o' the battaglio pie and turn the tables on Plumtree and the others.' And he did, child—he did. And I lived to wear out my weeds and con over my cookery book but a dozen years after him, and now I'm dead"—the poor lady sobbed—"I do it still, chit—I do it still! My hapless spirit is bound up in the yellow pages of that cookery book. I know not when my bondage shall cease, and rest be mine at last!"

"Poor lady—unhappy ghost!" I cried. "Will nothing bring you peace?"

You would have known you had been interviewing a ghost by the fading outlines of Lady Deborah's form and features, and the way in which the black oak chair upholstered with old gilt leather showed through the hooped skirts of green and pink brocade. Her vanishing lips framed but two other words. . . .

"Battaglio pie," she said, and was gone in an instant; and with a crash the cookery book fell to the floor, and I sat up, wondering whether I had been dreaming? On the whole, I guessed I had not. When I picked up the prostrate cookery book, I knew I had not, for one of the many-times dogs-eared pages was doubled over in a perfectly fresh place, and the page bore the famous recipe for battaglio pie.

The post that followed brought my

promised letter. The next day brought a marconigram from Bryan. Marconi is hardly the language of love, but it did at a pinch. Parpa was no worse, it said, and I was not to be anxious. Indeed, by the time the liner picked up her pilot off Sandy Hook, the bulletins were so favourable that Bryan decided to return right away, Parpa being quite out of danger. He did return—one of our great Atlantic ferry-boats being on the point of starting—and I marconied a message which hit the ship 1,065 miles west of the Lizard, to say I was well and happy, and learning to cook!

That was so. I had respectfully replaced Lady Deborah's cookery book upon her escrutoire, after copying the fatal and famous recipe for battaglio pie. . . . I had made friends with the ruler of the Abbey kitchen, and under her tuition was rapidly mastering the secret of flaky pastry.

June was scarcely over our heads; all the ingredients were procurable, though the heavy groan that burst from the head game-keeper's bosom, when I demanded three young partridges, I never shall forget. He brought them, though, and I had but to amass the quail, the squab pigeon, the cocks-combs, sweetbreads, oysters, sheeps' tongues, and so forth, from other sources. Thus, on the afternoon previous to Bryan's return, I lined a stately dish with rich pie-paste, I piled in all the good things, added the eggs, forcemeat, spices, cream and butter, and drew the cover over all, ornamenting it with devices cut with antique pewter moulds that Lady Deborah herself may have used. I glazed the outside with egg-white. And then I saw the pie slide into a gentle oven, and knew my task would soon be done. An hour later, as I lay resting in my favourite corner of the spindle-legged, tapestry-covered sofa in the long drawing-room, I had a second visit from Lady Deborah. She wore her black silk calash this time, and behind her great silver-rimmed spectacles her eyes snapped and sparkled with a joy that was—was it malign? She spread out her rustling brocade skirts as I rose up, and responded to my hesitating curtsy with the grandest cheese I had ever seen.

"I am vastly obleeged, Lydia," she said, smiling her old cheeks into creases. "You have behaved monstrous genteely, child, and I feel that I shall owe my freedom to your generosity. I have taken measures that the reputation of the Abbey shall not suffer, as there is a lamentable lack of *ton* about a family residence without a ghost. Sir

Umphrey, who got grant of the demesne from King Henry VIII., and, as you may have heard, murdered the abbot who took exception to the grant, has arranged to haunt the inhabited wings as well as the shut-up portion. You have also a third share in a banshee brought into the family by one of the Desmonds, who intermarried with us in 1606, and there is a hugely impressive death-watch in the wainscoting of your room. Therefore, I need have no scruples in taking the change of air so necessary for vapours."

She took her great calash and spreading brocades away. I forgot her—forgot the pie—forgot everything an hour later, in the joy of Bryan's arrival. With the aid of the housekeeper and by the advice of the cook, I had had prepared a real traveller's dinner, and at last my battaglio pie was placed upon the table before the master of the house.

Such a pie! a mountain of golden, flaky crust, exhaling delicious, tempting, savoury odours. I looked across it at Bryan, and laughed in sheer delight at his astonishment.

"So this is the joke you have been keeping to yourself all the evening, Lydia, you little witch!" said Bryan, laughing too. "A pie—a monster pie—and a savoury pie, too, made by your own hands, what?" He sniffed the delicious steam with expanded nostrils and filled his glass with port. "Here's to the health of Lady Lydia Corbryan," he cried gaily, "the best wife and the best cook in the Four Kingdoms—not to mention the Realms beyond the Seas!"

Where had I heard those words—most of them—before? I grew dizzy as Bryan seized the silver pastry-knife and spoon and plunged into the depths of the battaglio pie . . . A change seemed to have come over him, the outlines of his face and figure seemed to waver and alter as I gazed speechlessly, waiting for something to come . . .

"I've dined already," my husband cried in a thick voice that frightened me, "but I'll bet you a sovereign to a sixpence that I finish the dish!"

"Bryan!" I screamed . . . "Bryan!" and barely recognised him to whom I appealed. That crimson face, with the moist shine of perspiration glossing it, the powdered wig pushed back from the swollen forehead, the piggish, twinkling eyes, gross, flabby mouth, and three chins drooping over the flowing lace cravat . . . Strange to me . . . all strange, yet so horribly, horribly familiar! I must have risen from my chair and rushed to him, for I found myself clinging to a

man's arm and crying: "Don't touch it! If you love me, Bryan, don't touch it!" over and over again.

"Of course not, if you don't wish it, little woman!" said the dear, familiar voice. Bryan was holding me, and the face I loved was pressed comfortingly to mine. "Look here, Pet, I didn't mean to vex you. I'll throw it out of the window if you want me to."

"Y-yes!" I sobbed, with chattering teeth. "Th-throw it out . . . do, please!" and Bryan heaved up the huge pie-dish in his muscular hands.

"Open the window, please," he said, and I hurried to obey. The casement swung wide upon a square of star-jewelled darkness . . . Did I hear a shrill, thin, eerie scream? Did I hear another casement crash open, somewhere in the West Wing, as the battaglio pie was hurled into the night?

I asked Phee next morning to accompany me to Lady Deborah's room. The intrepid girl followed, only delaying to wind a thread of red marking-cotton nine times round her left thumb, and tuck her Aunt Dinah's hymn-book into what she termed "de bosom" of her gown. As I climbed the stairs, threaded recollected passages, and with just a little qualm of nervousness opened the not-to-be-forgotten door, a blast of cold air saluted me. The casement swung open, fragments of its shattered panes still jagging in the leads, and a yellowish snow of torn papers littered the floor. They were fragments of the cookery book, torn to atoms by a force unknown . . . What force? The portrait of Lady Deborah gazed stonily from over the fireplace and made no answer.

What would have happened had Bryan indulged the hereditary instinct that led him to hunger, even after a full meal, for battaglio pie? Would he have ended existence like the unlucky glutton, his ancestor, in stertorous coma, unrelieved by depletion? Should I have died of grief, and haunted the Abbey in Lady Deborah's stead, a disconsolate, widowed shade, continually brooding over a battered edition of the "Compleat Housewife"? Who can say?

But it smelt wonderfully good. There have been hungry moments when I have half regretted not tasting it, the sole achievement in the cookery line I am destined ever to accomplish.

I have never seen Lady Deborah since!

[The recipes quoted by the ghost of Lady Deborah have been taken from a copy of "The Compleat Housewife" in the author's possession, dated 1733.]

# A NEW ZEALAND PILGRIMAGE.

By DOROTHEA BARRETT.



THEODORA says that before she crossed to New Zealand she always imagined it to be quite close to Australia—as close as Ireland is to England, in fact; but it is not, oh, it is *not*. It is an incredible distance

from *any* shore. It is miles and miles—"millions of miles," Leonora says—and long, long days and endless nights on a tossing, heaving, rolling sea, a wicked sea, with that all-over nasty look it gets when the waves are long and grey with creamy foam on their tops.

Theodora says that you may make many journeys on the sea, you may go to Australia, Africa, America, but until you have been to New Zealand you cannot say that you have voyaged, and that no one can speak with authority on voyages until they have crossed from Australia to New Zealand, from the North to the South Island, and thence back again to Australia.

And Leonora? You would scarcely recognise Leonora on a New Zealand boat. Meek, despairing, motionless, speechless, a very wraith she is of Leonora on the shore.

Euphemia—Euphemia lies still for hours, so still, so silent, that oftentimes Theodora goes softly to her, to ascertain if she be still alive. Then the Unselfish One will raise her head, and in a faint voice implore Theodora to try to eat something, with feeble urgency recommending a plain baked potato. When begged to take something herself, she silently shakes her head and subsides again into torpor.

There is a day when they come to land somewhere—none of them remember afterwards what land, only that it was land—where they are to stop for an hour. To stop!

Only those who have been upon a New Zealand boat understand what it means "to stop."

The tossing, the rolling, the smashing of crockery, the thudding of the engines, the ceaseless noise and clatter, the hurrying to and fro upon the floor of cabin trunks, shoes,

brushes, hats and hairpins, it is all to stop, and everything is to stay where it is placed in quiet and in order for one hour.

For one hour there is to be peace.

They say that they will go on shore.

Others tell them that it is foolish to leave the boat for so short a time, and Theodora goes to Leonora and asks her if, after all, it will perhaps be better not to go? But Leonora merely replying feverishly: "Land, land!" grabs her hat and tears out of the cabin.

They sit somewhere on a green bank, by a little ditch, opposite a tiny hedge—a tiny hedge, *green* and covered over with little leaves. It seems too lovely to be real.

They sit staring at the little hedge till the last moment possible to return to the boat.

At night there is a gorgeous moon shining across the waves, and the sea is alight with phosphorescence, blazing with it, but Leonora does not see this because she is down in her cabin weeping.

\* \* \* \* \*

It is baggage-day, and all the boxes are up on deck from the hold.

The wind is strong, and the deck is wet, and everyone is pattering about with bundles and packages which the wind threatens to blow away.

Euphemia and Theodora have been down to ask Leonora—Leonora is downstairs; she has been downstairs ever since the boat left—whether there is anything she wishes them to get for her from her trunk.

When they ask her this, she murmurs something in a faint voice. They cannot quite understand what she means, but it seems to be a request to them to take all her things, pretty gowns, hats and all, and throw them overboard, as she will never, never need them again.

When they try to console her with the thought that she will be better by-and-by, she says she will never be better. The very idea of being better seems to annoy and disturb her so much that they leave her and return to the deck.

\* \* \* \* \*

The small beagle hound who lives in a large cage on the upper deck is howling



“The very idea of being better seems to annoy and disturb her so much that they leave her.”

dismally. He is travelling all alone by himself, and is taken out to walk upon the deck by different kind people, when the weather is smooth enough and the kind people well enough. This, however, happens but seldom.

He is a nice beagle, but he seems to be unhappy in his mind. He does not eat, and buries all his food under his bed. Perhaps

he, too, like many of the passengers, begins to despair of ever reaching that far-distant shore, towards which they are voyaging in an aged boat, upon a stormy sea—a grey, heaving, cruel sea, through which the ship struggles bravely, fighting a gallant way across thousands of miles. On, on, rolling, rolling. Torrents of rain and spray; bang,



bang, smash of crockery. At dinner mighty waves send everything flying, to return sliding back again with the next roll. At tea, cups, saucers, and plates are tossed hither and thither, and teapots empty themselves over the cakes, or over the passengers, indifferently. Great green, rolling waves, of such a height that they seem as if they must swamp the boat, come thundering down and flood the deck.

At night the curtain over the cabin door swings out and back again, out and back again; the ulsters on the pegs sway to and fro, to and fro; the cabin trunks slide from their place beneath the berth, and shoot back again with a thud. Bang, clatter, clatter, bang.

Now and again there is an awful lurch, right down, down, and then a shiver and a silliness, till the boat rights herself again.

Rats eat up everyone's gloves and shoes, although there is a wonderful cat, which, so the steward says, catches them two at a time, one with each paw. When Leonora is told this by Theodora, she is understood to murmur faintly: "Why not a third with its tail?"

Sports take place on a rolling deck, and Theodora is asked to join in them, to which she replies, as some think, disagreeably, that she never has, nor ever wished to sport, on land, and is not going to begin to do so on sea. And such a sea!

There are days when the engines get too hot, and the boat has to stop to rest for hours—only sails up—crawling along, lurching and rolling, rolling and lurching.

There are long, long days and endless nights—for weeks.

Can you wonder that Leonora says she will never be any better?

\* \* \* \* \*

The page boy at the hotel has a little horse which he offers to Theodora for half-a-crown a day.

A business-like child he is, who saves up his money and with it buys horses, which he lets out by the week.

This is quite a pretty little chestnut; it is known in the town as "the 2/6 horse." It is brought to the door for Theodora to look at, but it is such a very slender little horse that Theodora really fears she might break it if she rode upon it, so she declines, much to the child's disappointment, and hires the Emperor instead.

The Emperor is big and black, with a pretty head and kind and gentle eyes, a courteous and sweet-tempered thing, as quiet

as a large, sleepy pussy cat. He is the pride and the joy of the livery stables, and when Theodora returns him after her first ride the grooms come and ask if she is pleased with him. They are so obviously sure that everyone must be pleased with the Emperor, that it is quite touching.

The Emperor dislikes violent exertion, so does Theodora. She always says she suffers from "excessive fragility." "Excessive laziness," Leonora says. There is something not truly sympathetic about Leonora at times.

As it might almost be said that Theodora and the Emperor dislike exertion of any kind, they get along very happily together. They both love mooning along for hours through the peaceful country, the Emperor stopping unrebuked to munch up little sweet bits of grass and clover. This he does frequently, being indeed a pig—a pretty but a greedy pig.

When it is time to go home, and very often it is the Emperor who decides this, they turn, and he finds his own placid way back to the stables, without haste or worry. Never would Theodora find her own way; indeed, Christchurch, New Zealand, is the only place in the world in which Theodora ever did find her own way, and that was due to the smallness of the town, and to the height of the cathedral spire, which is visible from every portion of the place, and is immediately opposite to their hotel.

Through woods with winding paths they ride, past little brooks and waterfalls, amidst a tangle of green, luxuriant undergrowth, and greenest grass and trees, and hedges where birds sing, and ferns and broom. Through real bush country, and sand dunes that flame with yellow gorse, and in the distance mountains with misty clouds hanging above. The air is sweet with the scent of hay and clover, and the fields are bright with daisies and buttercups.

Sometimes they meet parties of children on horseback coming home from school. Two tiny tots they often see riding, one behind the other, on a fat, cantering pony.

Once they meet a large, fat, Maori lady, a handsomely tattooed and very imposing person, seated astride her horse with her three children behind her, riding, one, two, three, behind each other.

When, on her return from these rides, Euphemia interrogates Theodora as to where she has been, Theodora never has the least idea; she only says that the Emperor has taken her such a lovely ride, adding, with a



"They get along very happily together."

sigh of uttermost content: "And we *have* had such a *beautiful* time, the Emperor and I."

\* \* \* \* \*

The Unselfish One has an uncanny way with animals; she will make what she calls "rabbit noises" to a fox-terrier, and drive him nearly crazy with fury and excitement because he can neither see nor find the rabbit, which he never doubts *is* a rabbit.

Once, when they have been driving all day

long amongst the hills, in a glory of golden gorse and broom, they come back along the sea road. It winds in and out above the sea, and you look down over the blue water where the rough rocks jut out here and there. As they are coming through the toll-gate, they get the woman at the lodge to give them tea. They have the tray in the carriage, and the coachman picks them cockles from the beach. These they dislike enormously, but do not like to hurt his

feelings by refusing them. They give him tea, and he eats it on the wheel, talking sociably to them all the time, as is the way of Colonial drivers, servants, and such.

There are three cats at the lodge, or to be, as Euphemia says, "accurate"—Euphemia is so unexpectedly accurate at times—there are two cats and a kitten. The Unselfish One starts mewling to them, and a cat puts its head out of the lodge window, then another follows, listening, listening, and at last cautiously, cautiously, creeping, creeping up to the carriage comes the tiny

kitten. They seem fascinated; they must think it is some language like their own, a kind of *patois*, perhaps, which yet they cannot quite understand.

Euphemia converses thus with them for some time, until at last it strikes her that the lodge woman is looking rather oddly at the group. No doubt she thinks them mad, to have tea and cockles in a carriage and talk thus familiarly with cats, so Theodora hastily gives the order to drive on, and away they go, leaving toll-woman, cats, and small kitten all staring after them.



## FOR DOLLY,

WHO DOES NOT LEARN HER LESSONS.

**Y**OU see the fairies dancing in the fountain,  
 Laughing, leaping, sparkling with the spray.  
 You see the gnomes at work beneath the mountain,  
 Make gold and silver and diamonds every day.  
 You see the angels sliding down the moonbeams,  
 Bring white dreams, like sheaves of lilies fair.  
 You see the imps scarce seen against the moonbeams,  
 Rise from the bonfire's blue and liquid air.

All the enchantment, all the magic there is  
 Hid in trees and birds and beasts, to you is plain and true.  
 Dewdrops in lupin leaves are jewels for the fairies;  
 Every flower that blows is a miracle for you.  
 Air, earth, water, fire, spread their splendid wares for you.  
 Millions of magics beseech your little looks;  
 Every soul your winged soul meets, loves you and cares for you.  
 Ah! why must we clip those wings and dim those eyes with books?

Soon, soon enough, the magic lights grow dimmer,  
 Marsh mists arise to veil the radiant sky.  
 Dust of hard highways will veil the starry glimmer,  
 Tired hands will lay the folded magic by.  
 Storm winds will blow through those enchanted closes,  
 Fairies be crushed where weed and brier grow strong . . .  
 Leave her her crown of magic stars and roses.  
 Leave her her kingdom—she will not keep it long.

E. NESBIT.

# COMMON FAULTS IN ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL.

By W. I. BASSETT.



HERE is no subject more ardently debated by lovers of football than that represented in the question: Is the standard of football equal to what it was fifteen or twenty years ago?

It cannot be doubted that many placed like myself in the football world are strongly convinced that there has been a deterioration in the skill of the footballer. Some people, I know, take the reverse attitude and say: "Oh, no, it is only you old fogies who talk like this. The truth is, that football is more highly organised to-day than ever it was, and goals are a great deal more difficult to score to-day than they were when you and your contemporaries played." Of course, there is always apt to be virtue in an attitude of that kind, for, say what you will, the attitude of the man who ranks among the back numbers is rather apt to be adverse to the methods of the present time; or, to put it perhaps more fairly, there is always a leaning towards the state of things which operated when he was actively identified with a certain pastime. But looking constantly at football as I do, I am bound to say that I see many evidences of thoughtless play. I see men associated with leading clubs who are scarcely of the same type of player we used to see identified with the best elevens in years gone by. The chief fault, I think, is this, that men do not study the game to the extent that their predecessors did; but probably the faults are mainly due to the men's environment.

Now, as you all know, environment plays a great part in determining the status of a man. Ninety-nine men out of a hundred—and one might almost go further—are essentially the products of their time. It is only here and there that you get a genius who breaks away from tradition. Tradition, in fact, is all-powerful. The average man unhesitatingly, and, indeed, unthinkingly, falls into the method in favour at the moment. Now, there can be no doubt that the keynote of modern football is combination. I have nothing whatever to say

against that keynote. Combination it was, without doubt, that rendered the great teams of the past superior to their contemporary elevens. Eleven men acting in combination will beat eleven individualists, pure and simple, who make no attempt to form a homogeneous whole. But present-day players seem to me to have gone to almost absurd lengths in doting upon combination, and a state of things has come about in which you see men drifting into habits which are the result of lack of self-control and self-reliance. The crowd, too, has been brought up to believe that the first and fundamental duty of a player is to pass the ball. I say that the fundamental duty of a player is nothing of the kind. The first and, indeed, the last duty of a player is to pass the ball intelligently; but how often do you see men receive the ball, and instantly and, as I say, practically without thought, whiz it away somewhere else? Now, the unnecessary pass is one of the weakest and falsest things in football. After all, to come to the bedrock fact, when a man has the ball, his own side are at least in possession of it, and while they are in possession of it, the effectiveness of the other side is for the moment checked. There is a possibility before the one side, but there is no possibility before the other. Far better, therefore, for a man who has the ball to do something tangible with it—to make his way for goal, for instance—than to indiscriminately bang it somewhere else, where, of course, it may go to a friend, but where it is almost equally likely to be pounced upon by a foe.

We saw a great deal of unnecessary passing in the two English Cup Finals in which the talented Newcastle team were opposed respectively by Aston Villa and Wolverhampton Wanderers. Time after time the ball was passed by Newcastle men in a singularly ineffective way, and the smart and nippy halves belonging to what was generally regarded as the less able side had quite a gala day on the occasion of each Final. No one doubted the ability of Newcastle, but their game was far too academic. Crisp and clean passing, mixed up with wide crosses from wing to wing, enabled Aston Villa to baffle their more scientific opponents completely.

Now, the effect of this kind of play upon the individual is undoubtedly unsatisfactory. The old dribbler used to whip along at top speed, with the ball at his toe, and wonderful control he had over it. When he got in front of the posts, he invariably let fly. He shot hard and, as a rule, straight; in fact, he tried to score. But I have seen many men playing football during the last few years who, it seemed to me, actually shirked responsibility in the matter of shooting for goal. Now, that represents a lamentable state of things; but, after all, it is by no means an unnatural development of the passing game. How many men do you find in present-day football with the greatest of all tricks in their locker? The greatest of all tricks—and I am speaking of forward play now—is for a man to be able to dribble past the back and score. It is quite as usual to see unnecessary passing right in front of the posts to-day as it is to see the same unnecessary passing in mid-field. But unnecessary passing in front of the posts is a much more cardinal crime than unnecessary passing in mid-field. A man should literally yearn for a chance of shooting at goal, but how often do you see a man well placed pass weakly and needlessly to another who is not so well placed as even he himself was? If you never shoot, you cannot score; that is surely a good football axiom; and for a player who has even what I should call a good outside chance of scoring to pass out the ball to a wing-man, who at the best can only centre it near to the point from which he received it, seems to me to be heterodox. A mere scramble in the direction of goal would probably serve his side better; indeed, I do not think present-day teams realise how deadly the rush at goal is.

The rush at goal was high in favour at the time when I was playing with West Bromwich Albion. There were men of the type of Jem Bayliss, of the Albion, and John Brodie, of Wolverhampton Wanderers, who never lost a chance of going for the goal-keeper. It is true that modern football legislation has robbed the vigorous centre-forward of the prerogative he then enjoyed, which prerogative was often to carry the goal-keeper through before the ball had arrived. But there is nothing in the present rules to prevent forwards rushing for goal with the ball at their toes, and literally carrying the posts by assault. It must not be forgotten that the goal-keeper is then little better off than a back, for the simple reason that the prerogative he enjoys—*viz.*,

that of using his hands—can scarcely be brought into play. You often see a goal-keeper take the ball right from the toe of a centre-forward in daring fashion, but in the old-fashioned rush the custodian rarely had a chance of picking the ball up. A rush of that description is ten times more likely to bring about a goal than a tame and weak shot from long range.

Who that met West Bromwich Albion on the old Four Acres Ground at West Bromwich will forget their fierce rush down the hill which was a disquieting feature of that enclosure—from the point of view of the visiting side? It was terrific. And who does not recall the fierce rushes for goal of the redoubtable James Belger, the centre-forward who helped to bring Preston North End into prominence? There are goal-keepers of the old school who shudder to-day when they think of what they went through at the hands of Belger. He once charged Harry Stansbie, the Birmingham St. George's goal-keeper, and the poor custodian never knew what had happened until he found himself lying prostrate against a black fence a full dozen yards at the back of the goal!

Men do not pay sufficient attention to mastering the art of either dribbling or shooting; that I should describe as one of the greatest faults of present-day football. It is a certainty that no man will ever learn to dribble well unless he learns to do so in practice. The opportunities for learning to dribble in match play do not come with sufficient frequency to enable a man to improve his game in that particular respect. Men do not get enough practice with the ball. I know that it is sound policy to keep men away from football practice when they are in active training for a big match, because what a man has not learned prior to that match he is not likely to learn specially for that encounter. But there are hundreds of little tricks, which go to make the good footballer, which players do not assiduously practise. There are few good dribblers to-day, and that is because the art of dribbling is consistently neglected. Surely it does not follow that because a man is a good dribbler he will, therefore, fail to realise the full value of the effects of combination? Some of the finest players of my day were magnificent dribblers, but there was not one of them, I venture to say, who had not a thorough appreciation of the value of combination. But when you do possess the knack of the dribble, you are at least able to use it in an



"A FOUL CLOSE ON THE EIGHTEEN YARDS LINE." FROM THE PICTURE BY S. T. DADD.



emergency ; if you do not possess it, you cannot use it. Men who took part in the old six-a-side contests of years gone by developed a remarkable capacity for individual work, and many people regret that the old-fashioned six-a-side contest is not known to the practical footballer of to-day.

The proficiency North End obtained at this six-a-side game, when they were represented by Nick Ross, Davie Russell, and Graham or Robertson, with Gordon, John Goodall, and Geordie Drummond as the attacking trio, was indeed remarkable. But who will ever forget the stirring dribbles of W. N. Cobbold, of E. C. Bambridge, and of Archie Hunter, to say nothing of the great individual players across the Border ? Anything that tends to bring out the individuality of a player is to be encouraged.

Another and serious fault in modern football is the lack of adaptability which so many men display. Now, adaptability is a great asset to any side. I have seen many an important Cup Tie won, not, indeed, necessarily by the cleverer side, but by the side which proved itself the more adaptable on the day. The game which pays on a hard, dry stretch of turf will not pay on an afternoon when the ground is a sea of mud and slush, and yet I have seen really high-class teams continue to play a close-passing game on a muddy field, with the result that practically every pass has been futile, the ball being intercepted by an agile and dashing opponent. On such a stretch of turf the only effective method is to open out the game, to let the wing men do the running, for the field is always better at the sides than in the centre, and then, when the ball comes into the middle, for the whole of the forwards to either rush in, or for the first man who gets into even a decent position to take a pot shot

at goal. Shots come off under those circumstances which would have a little chance of scoring on a better day, for the goal-keeper is as much inconvenienced by the slippery turf as the forward.

Many a great game has been won by a pot shot at goal. Poor Harry Allen, now dead and gone, the International centre-half, won the Cup for the Wolverhampton Wanderers at Fallowfield by taking a long shot at the goal, and I remember John Reynolds shooting a snap goal in an International against Scotland, when England seemed certain to be beaten. James M'Laren, of the Celtic, did the same thing in an International at the Oval, and won the game for his side, 3-2. He was chaired off by excited Scots, and the game is always recalled as M'Laren's match.

One great fault which men make is that they shoot right at the goal-keeper instead of at the portions of net which are not guarded. I have never seen a man shoot more indiscriminately than Bloomer does, and he shoots to avoid the goal-keeper. Many men simply bang in at the goal, with the result that their shots are usually intercepted by the goal-keeper. Few men shoot or pass with the side of one foot sufficiently. They are too apt to use the toe in shooting, and it takes a clever footballer to shoot effectively with his toe. Then, again, men do not trap the ball well, while those who trap it well often trap it when their side is moving towards goal ; they want to take it on the run then. The man who stops to trap the ball under those circumstances is often the means of allowing his opponents to get into position, whereas, had he taken the risk and gathered the ball on the run, the goal might have fallen while the defenders were out of position. The forward who loses time always loses an opportunity ; that is a golden rule in football.

## TO CYNTHIA.\*

**L**ET others woo in lofty rhyme,  
 With verse and metaphor sublime ;  
 So that you read my lowly chime,  
 I rest contented.  
 No flights of fancy fine for me,  
 Or chaste poetic imagery,  
 All I desire—sincerity  
 Unornamented.

I could not sing your winsome grace,  
 Nor paint the beauty of your face,  
 With my poor art, in this small space ;  
 And effort clever  
 Of mine, your merits to rehearse  
 In simple or in sounding verse,  
 Than this short line would still be worse  
 I'm yours forever.

EILY ESMONDE.

# AN ISLAND INFERNO.

By EDWARD NOBLE,

*Author of "The Edge of Circumstance," "The Grain-Carriers," etc.*



SOME two hundred and fifty miles distant from Callao are two islands, bare and sun-scorched, nestling in the lap of the blue Pacific. Peaks of submerged mountain chains, in other words, whereon for centuries

countless birds have nested and guano has grown.

The one, bleak and rugged—a blur of huts and brown-striped desolation, sheltering a fleet of ships; the other, less hilly, more soft—lying like a red and yellow cone on the far horizon.

The vessels lay under North Island and were moored in tiers, awaiting the Peruvian Government's treasure. British and American ships predominated, as was usual in those days; but there were also a few hog-backed Germans, several white Frenchmen, a spattering of Italians, Spaniards, Norwegians, and one Russian. All these had rounded the Horn, emptied their freights into West Coast ports, and come to Callao to be "passed" for a load of odorous guano—a commodity the crews cursed with scandalous unanimity.

A brown and dreary solitude confronted them on the landward side, a miserable routine on board. In all essentials many of the ships were floating hells, others were still in training. Here and away it was possible to discover an easy-going craft, but generally the mates and skippers vied with each other in making their vessels a hot and busy inferno.

The hottest of them all, however, one running easily first in the race for savagery, was a great down-East Yank, a vessel with an elliptical stern, a green poison streak, and three diminutive skysails. Her crew were Dutchmen—"Bismarck's apprentices," the facetious mate dubbed them—who went in fear of their lives during the day and were thoughtfully locked in their forecabin at night.

They were amply fed, worked like galley slaves, and sent in turn each morning to the skysail truck, to crow a greeting to the rising sun. One man utterly refused to crow, but he was a Scotsman, Hendricksen, a person who had come on the ship's roster for a purpose and by a cunning adaptation of the Dutchman's tongue.

The man was quiet, self-possessed, and always civil; but in spite of the fact that he was in the mate's watch, he never "flew" as did those others, the Iron Chancellor's apprentices.

One night, when the ship was midway on her passage between Callao and the islands, the man came out of his shell.

A flat calm reigned, and as many stars hung larcinent in the still water as flashed in the darker heavens above. It was the middle watch, the sleepy watch, and the mate was in charge. To keep the men alive and himself awake, a dozen shipboard manoeuvres had been executed. The mainsail had been hauled up and reset more than once, the halliards and sheets had all received a sweating, and the yards had been hauled jerkily to all possible points of the compass. But no wind filled the sails. The calm was absolute, the crew weary, handsore, and tired of shouting. So when at length an order came to "Back the mainyard!" the watch scrambled into the alley-way aft and started the braces without a whisper of song—an act of insolent contempt, as all sailors know.

The mate came to the verge of the monkey-poop and stood watching. "Avast hauling!" he roared.

The men stood still, and some of them shivered, for the mate's hand was in his pocket—a fact which carried a meaning.

"Sing out there, one of you!" he shouted. "You're pullin' like a crowd of all-fired washerwomen."

One of the lesser lights immediately struck up a quavering yell, and the watch began to pull in haste.

"Avast hauling!" came stridently from the poop. "Who in flames gave you leave to practise here?"

Again the men stood like a flock of sheep,

silent and huddled in the presence of danger, and again the mate's voice shook them.

"Hendricksen!"

"Sir?"

"Lay aft here an' show 'em how to sing."

The man stepped from his place at the tail of the brace and walked firmly up the line. "If the watch had the pluck of a mere loose among the lot o' them," he remarked, "they'd put an end tae hectorin' for good an' aa."

The Dutchmen shuffled uneasily and looked up as the mate leaped among them, lifting their arms for shelter. Then, in a moment, a burly Hamburger lay on the deck at their feet.

The mate stood over them. "Haul!" he shouted.

And the watch hauled, regardless of their stunned and bleeding comrade.

Ten minutes later, when the ropes had been coiled down, the mate leaned over the deck-house rail. "Hendricksen!" he called, "come aft."

The man obeyed, moving towards his superior with clenched fist and resolute air.

"Say," said the mate, "where d'yew hail from?"

"Villiamshaven, sir."

The mate cocked his head, eyeing this specimen.

"That so?" he asked. "How d'yew spell your name?"

"H-e-n-d-r-i-c-k-s-e-n," said the man.

"H-e-n-d-e-r-s-o-n," said the mate.

The man shuffled with his feet, then looked up with his answer. "I'll no quarrel wi' yoor orthography, sir," he said. "I'm thinkin' it's no material."

"Last voyage," said the chief, a suspicion of reminiscence in his voice, "we had a Henderson. It's not a savoury name on this packet."

The man waited in silence. He exhibited none of the usual signs of trepidation. He held his head erect and a gleam of anger flamed in his eyes.

"The second mate 'specially don't kinder hitch on to it," the mate resumed. "In future yew air Colin Campbell—savvy?"

"It's the name of a graund old warrior, sir. I'm no ashamed tae bear it."

"Right. Git for'ard—an' advise that blame fool Olsen to keep his head shut from mutinous talk—d'yew take me?"

"Olsen did na speak. 'Twas I spoke, an' ye know it."

The mate eyed this dogged specimen for some minutes before replying, then, turning

on his heel, "What in flames is that tew me?" he questioned, moving aft; "I heard Olsen. Git!"

A week later the vessel had taken her place in the third tier of shipping, and harbour life had commenced anew—which is to say that from dawn till dusk the crew worked aloft, polishing the yard brasses, scrubbing the paintwork, painting the channel plates, and preparing the hold for cargo. Certain moments were set aside in order that the men might eat, but they were short. That was the essence of the contract where rest came in. And here, under the frowning island hills, the tangled skein was taken in hand once more. Campbell and the mate, Campbell and the second mate, watching, waiting, dodging, while the Dutchmen stood aghast at their shipmate's temerity.

The two men who ruled this ship were perhaps as keen a pair of ruffians as may be found anywhere in West Coast ports, and yet they had their code. Nothing escaped the chief. He had the eye of a hawk, the nose of a bloodhound. A spot of dirt on the snow-white deck was sufficient excuse for breaking a man's head, tobacco stains produced a frenzy of words and the knuckle-dusters, while a spilled pot of paint or tar was visited by a stark-naked punishment in the 'tween-decks which closed the victim's lips for days.

The mate walked the deck arrogantly in what he called "a clean-boiled rag,"\* a long-sleeve black silk cap, and a pair of white ducks. He donned a coat only on special occasions. When the "old man" went ashore, he stood at the gangway in full rig; before dinner or tea or breakfast he appeared at the cabin door grimly watchful of the deck, but passive and bland in the aristocracy of a black coat and toothpick. At other times his toilet was that of a navvy after a Sunday wash and change.

But the mate was a gentleman, a saint, and a milksop beside his *confrère*, Paddy Flynn. This person was a Bluenose, a human thing utterly despicable and "low down" in the eyes of the chief, and only tolerated beneath the Stars and Stripes because of his known utility as a bruiser. Bruisers are essential in ships whose owners propose to keep a small wages bill—to pay, in point of fact, exactly as little as possible to the men who work and load the ship. They are necessary if the ship's discipline is to be maintained by two or three officers, and the crew driven out of

\* White shirt.

her when they have completed the loading and painting for which they were engaged. Therefore Paddy Flynn was shipped and tolerated on board the vessel, and the mate condescended on occasion to give him his orders.

He was, indeed, a burly savage, with no redeeming feature. A tall man, heavily built and of sullen temper. A person wearing a goatee beard and shaven cheeks, and equipped by Nature with a singularly forcible diction. He carried knuckle-dusters in his right-hand pocket, a derringer on his hip, and, for moderately persuasive efforts, a teaser made of two feet of pliant manilla knotted at the end.

When the men saw him slouching forward twirling this instrument, and with one trouser leg tucked within his Wellingtons, they hastened their movements and sometimes fled aloft. It was safer there.

A fortnight elapsed and the ship shone from keel to truck. Her yards were scraped and varnished, the iron bands had received a coat of red paint, the copper shone, the shrouds and stays had all received a dressing of white. The gaunt sides, the scroll on bow and stern, all winked in the sun-glare. The ship was ready for cargo, and despite the fact that it was unlikely she would receive any in a port where vessels never commenced to load until they were on demurrage, a launch started each morning and rowed to the island shoots.

Paddy Flynn commanded here. His crew were two scared Dutchmen, who tugged at the oars and kept a vigilant eye on the mate, sculling with a sweep in the stern. There were three shoots down which the guano was tilted from the works above, and perhaps sixty launches all lying off, clamouring for a load. A Chinaman controlled the output, and, as is the manner of Chinamen, made no bobbery if he were propitiated by some pushing driver who desired the turn. One day a signal was made from the Cape Horn shoot ordering the vessel's launch alongside. But Flynn was holding a *levée* on a companion craft, and before he could return, a nearer crew had filched the load. A noisy scene ensued, but the Chinaman remained firm, and Flynn was compelled to retire.

This was bad, yet the climax was not reached until they moved off for "home" at sunset. A strong trade wind was blowing then, and the high-sided launch made no sort of progress across it. She drifted bodily to leeward in spite of the efforts of her sweating crew, and Flynn, sculling desperately in the

stern, was at a disadvantage. After perhaps an hour of this, the ship's boat bore down upon them and took them in tow. Then Flynn settled his belt and proceeded to force the pace. He came forward swinging his teaser, his lips firm set.

"Pull, *Schweinigel*!" he roared, suddenly bringing the rope on an oarsman's back, "pull! Let into it, or I'll break every bone in your blamed carcass!"

The man acknowledged his impotence much as the galley slaves of olden days acknowledged it—he lay back on his oar groaning, straining, his eyes registering hate. He was accustomed to blows, and recognised only one thing in the tangled misery he endured—the fact that Paddy Flynn was set over him to drive him from the ship, in order that the owners might legitimately bag his wages. Now, there was a small item of ten months' pay-due to this man and to his fellows, therefore they bit the bullet.

It was dark when they reached their vessel, and the mate, sitting on the rail, inclined to criticism. He pointed out that they had missed their turn at the tips, and deduced additionally that they had all been asleep. He admonished Flynn that he was there to get his launch loaded, and not to fandango around Mother Janus and her daughter—a pair who claimed the right of conquest over all mankind at the island grog-store.

Flynn climbed the deck without rejoinder. He made no effort to defend himself. Only his eyes took a sullen gleam as he stood to see the whale-boat hoisted. He watched especially the movements of Colin Campbell, who had been in the boat which had come to his assistance. Perhaps he had heard him speak, perhaps it was just the light which gleamed in the man's eyes. *Quien sabe?* When the grips had been hauled tight and Campbell reached the deck, he moved over and stood in his path, head bent, shoulders hunched.

"Git for'ud, *Schweinigel*!" he growled.

The Scotsman turned upon him blazing. "*Schweinigel* yooursel!" he shouted. "You have my name. See you use it!"

Flynn shook out his teaser.

"See this?" he snarled.

"I do."

"Then feel it, yew blamed skunk, an' remember to hold in the slack of yer jaw."

He struck him a swinging blow across the face, and in an instant Campbell leaped.

"Ye beastly cur!" he cried, and hit out vigorously right and left.

Flynn fell heavily to the deck. His head



"Then the mate sprang forward, the knuckle-dusters black on his fists."

came in contact with a ringbolt and he remained motionless. The rest of the crew gasped and ran towards the fore-castle. Then the mate sprang forward, the knuckle-dusters black on his fists, and Campbell backed to the rail. He mounted it swiftly and stood there a moment shouting his disappointment at the scurrying Dutchmen. "Ye're a pair lot!" he cried out. "I've done wi' you! Ye can fight it noo yoor-selves!"

Then he leaped overboard and disappeared.

\* \* \* \* \*

That night the vessel fully maintained her supremacy as a floating hell. The island loafers shuffled from the bar and sat listening. Lima Loo and Madam Janus, her mother, came outside and watched, then

returned to drink and to fleece those patrons who again were filling the shanty with clamour. Authority listened, too, but South American authority, like the Chinaman at the shoots, is generally amenable to certain forms of propitiation. The men came out, noted the direction, and arranged plans for a visitation—*mañana*.

In point of fact, the revolver shots which echoed in the darkness neither hit the crew nor were intended to. The afterguard worked off their fireworks for effect, and the effect was magnificent. A crew in such a roadstead is too valuable an asset to throw away in simple spleen. By and by, when a port was at hand where crimps kept a stock of sailors on hand, the fore-castle doors would be unlocked. Then if a man, or a crew, chose to run away and forfeit his pay—good. The

skipper would be prepared to take charge of the dollars for his owners. That is a case where simple interest becomes compound. Meanwhile, terrorising and not vengeance was the order of the day.

A month dragged slowly the way of others. Life had again fallen into the old groove. At three o'clock the *launcheros* sculled away in the darkness to seek guano. At four the crew turned out and scrambled to their giddy tasks, aloft and overside, where they burnished the ship's copper. At five-thirty three dreary, dew-sodden cocks crew on the skysail trucks, crawled down and went to work about decks which shone white in the glare of that tropic sun they had welcomed. Work till breakfast at eight, work till dinner at one, work till tea at five, work again till dusk and after. Then, when night was fully come, a weary tribe crawled into the fore-castle carrying their supper, listened while the locks were snapped upon them, and swore they liked it.

One night the second mate returned with news. It appeared that he had propitiated the Chinaman this time successfully, and, as a result, they were to go alongside the Cape Horn shoot for the first turn in the morning. The launch started in consequence at two o'clock, and came to the place of smells, rolling seas, and groaning hawsers. Then they waited an hour, perhaps two, and Flynn became boisterous. Other shoots had commenced. Why, he questioned, had they not done the same? He cursed the Dutchmen, talked of impossible retribution, and finally climbed ashore to flay the slant-eyed Chinaman.

When he had been a long while absent, a tall man, wearing a dark tuft beard and drooping moustache, came to the foot of the shoots. The crew shouted their view of the situation in guttural English.

"*Tu ne ah ma!*" said the man.

"That's a Chinese swear," said the crew, and they laughed.

"It's the boss, fer sure," said another who listened.

"*Mo pen ki ti!*" cried the man again. He stooped to examine the fastenings which held the shoot.

"Ven our turn come?" shouted the *launcheros*. "No can wait all 'ee day. Ketchie hell ven ve go back."

"Thuck got velly big blake," said the man. "No can lettee go shoot yet. Plesently I come back gain."

He rose from his stooping attitude and commenced to climb the greasy steps.

"Hi, John! No can wait here all 'ee day," the *launcheros* reiterated. "Hully up."

"Hully up? O yis, sir. I hully up all 'ee samee 'Melican sailor when mate makee plenty much bobbery."

This was too much even for the Dutchmen. They leaped from their seats and gesticulated in the darkness. "Hi! you ragged-faced Chinaman!" they shouted. "Vat you mean—hey? Vat you mean?"

But the man had disappeared. Half an hour passed. The *launcheros* quaked at the delay, but dared not leave to make inquiries. They shivered in their dew-wet garments and steadied themselves with difficulty, gripping the hawsers, slipping on the greasy bottom-boards. Then again came a sound at the tips: high up—hidden in the darkness the Chinamen were pushing a trolley.

The men listened. A rumbling shook the shoots, and someone shouted a request that the shoots might be released. Guano was tumbling down. Again and again trollies were tilted, yet nothing came into the launch. Then came a dozen sleepy Chinamen, a huge chattering, and at length the shoot was in position. A stream of brown and smelling earth crashed upon the bottom-boards.

In half an hour the launch was loaded and ordered to give way for a new-comer; but seeing that it was unwise to leave without Flynn, the *launcheros* continued to hold the shoot until others took grip of the situation and cast them adrift. At this they swept clear of the inner circle and dropped anchor, a mere freight of smelling earth and indecision.

The second mate had not returned at noon, and the men, though nearly daft with fear, still waited. They continued waiting until a boat from the ship came upon them, took them in tow, and lugged them home.

Beneath the thrust-out winch a crowd of diggers at once descended and began to fill the baskets which were lowered, while the mate, sitting upon the rail, critically remarked their efforts. Flynn he had relegated to a front seat in Hades. For the moment he was intent on breaking the record. An hour passed, the ten-ton heap was diminishing. Two heaps still remained on the floor of the launch—one forward, the other aft. Between them, standing on the slippery boards, the men dived, sweating.

Again the great Dutchman, Olsen, was at fault. He laboured more heavily than the rest, but something unusual hindered his efforts. He attacked the heap vigorously



with his shovel, casting side looks at the chief in his haste; then, when the whip came round, his basket was not filled, and a belaying-pin smote him in the small of the back as a token of the mate's displeasure.

The man sprang upright with a cry of pain. "Sir!" he shouted, "it eis heavy. I can-not by myself lift it."

"Hook on the whip, an' no back-talk!" said the mate.

"Sir! It eis canvasse—andt heavy. Donnerwetter! it eis heavy."

"Hook on!"

Others sprang to his assistance. They seized a portion and lugged it clear, hooking the whip about it. "Heave!" they cried, and the men on the platform started the winch in desperation.

The rope strained. The planks whereon the four men stood to heave creaked, then a lumbering mass trailed across the floor and a cry broke from the launcheros—"Holdt! Sare! holdt on."

"Hold your sister!" cried the mate. "What's wrong with the hook?"

"Nuddings mit ze hooke—but ze guano! *Schwein!*" they scrambled on the brown filth, digging at it.

The mate swarmed down the side and pushed the speaker aside.

"Out of my way, Bismarck!" he growled. "Blood, eh?" He stooped, examining it. "Some blame Chinaman's got knifed in the trollies, I guess. Stand back."

They hung there in a group, staring while the mate examined the package, and again sprang back when he stood upright.

"Rip it open," said the mate. "Smart, now. We're losin' time."

The bo'sun came forward and gripped the bundle.

"Sewn up in gunny bags," he commented. "A high-toned funeral sent the wrong road. Over wi' it. Out o' my tracks, Olsen. Shucks!" He stood up, looking at the mate. "Sir!" he yelled, "it's Flynn!"

"Flynn?"

"Himself," said the bo'sun.

The chief stepped forward and eyed the thing critically. "In sections," he added. "By thunder!"

He turned on his heel and hailed the men, who stood dazed and awe-stricken on platform and rail. "Send down the baskets!" he roared. "Yew've done for him—now heave him on deck."

He climbed the ship's side and stood in the chains, brandishing his pistol. "Any of yews got your knife into me?" he questioned.

"Ef so, stand out. I'm with yew." He fired a shot over their heads as they stood on that giddy platform, and the men ducked in unison.

"Who spoke?" he raved, standing coolly mindful of his power. "Yew, Olsen? Take that, you lumberin' fool!" A shot pierced the boards at the man's feet, and he leaped in terror.

"Yew've done for Flynn, Bismarck's sucklings. Good. Now do for me. I'm here all the time. I'll play yews alone."

He climbed to the rail, leaped to the spar, and passed unflustered to his cabin.

\* \* \* \* \*

A clear, dew-sodden night, with the moon sailing high in crisp, blue heavens. In the distance the dull surf monotone, near at hand the slow fall of drops from yards and rigging, the deck patterned under them. A dozen vessels stood out in view, the rest were sunk in haze. The lamps burned mistily, like stars which have entered the lower strata, and had taken to them a red glow. Scarcely any wind stirred the glassy sea, and the silence of the world's lone spaces brooded over all.

A watchman dozed in comfort beneath the poop awning, sheltering from a dew which was wet like rain. The decks reflected no light, but the copper on the ship's yards and rails gleamed like silver. All the gossamer rigging and forest of spars twinkled in that glowing night.

A silent ship, a sleeping crew, a drowsy guardian—that was the scene, done in silver point, upon which the moon looked down.

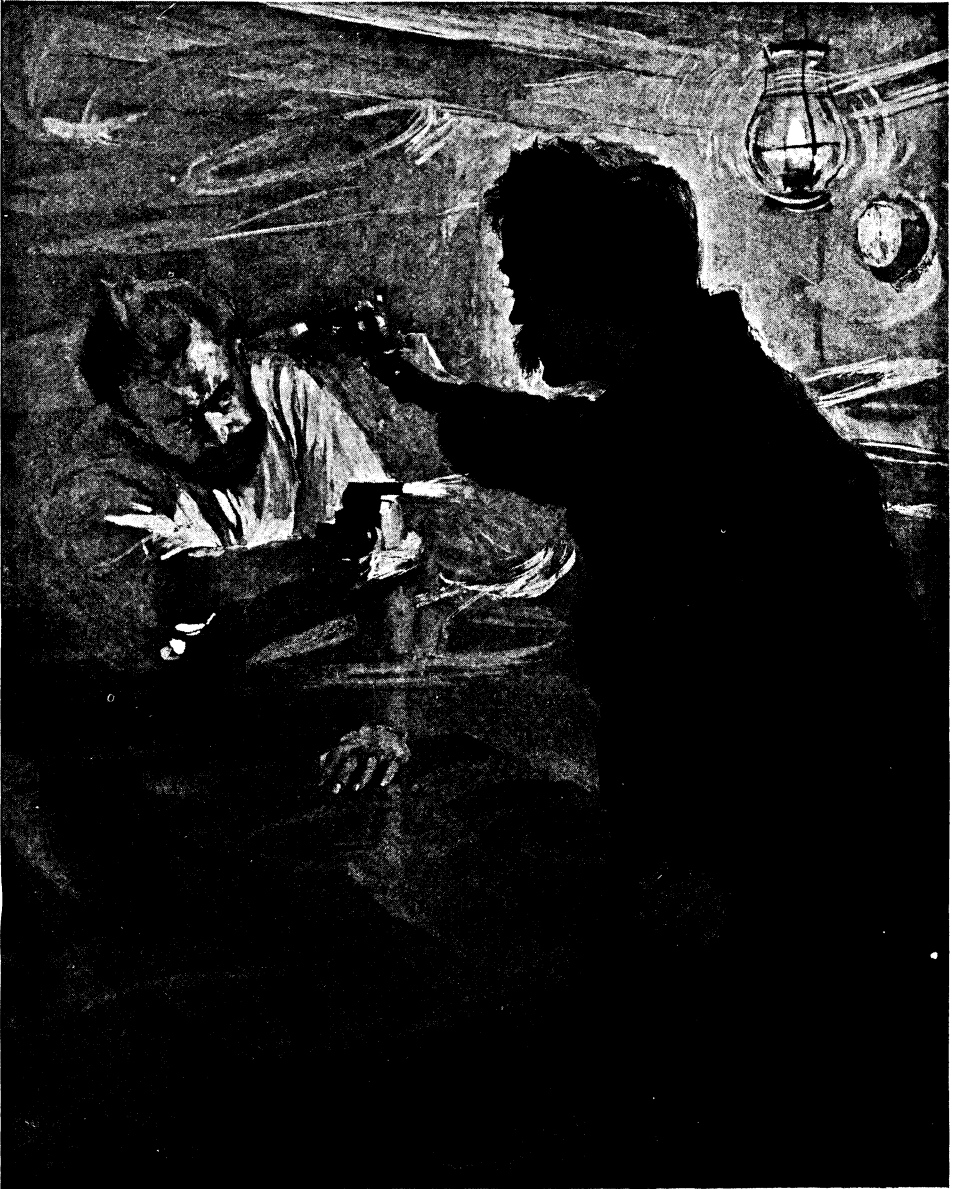
The boy watchman shivered in his long deck-chair. He awoke and glanced at the clock. Half-past twelve. One bell. He rose and struck it, then came again to his seat under the awning, and the ship returned to silence. To silence and shadows. Silence and shimmering moonbeams. Silence and one dark splotch creeping down the white paint at the break of the forecastle. Slowly for an animate thing it moved—fast for a shadow cast by any known figure or substance.

It trailed at length into the waterways, and grew indistinct amidst the blurred ropes and spars which stood all down the rail. A space of minutes and it passed an open side port and disappeared. Again, far aft now, still in the waterways, still without sound, like a giant lizard, until the break of the poop was reached and it slowly rose.

A man stood now on the gratings, staring

at the cabin entrance. A man wholly shrouded in black, a poncho about his shoulders, a black sombrero shading his face. He listened. The dew-patter falling on the

At the cabin entrance was a square lobby wherein two doors were set. The two mates slept here, one on either hand—the one eternally, the other from sheer fatigue. The



"The shots continued—again, again."

decks alone made sound. He crept in silence up the alley-way, came to the saloon, turned the key in the lock, and quietly retraced his footsteps.

man crept to the room on the lintel of which was a brass label carrying the words—1st Mate. He turned the handle and stepped within. The sleeper did not stir. The man

closed the door and lighted the lamp. It spluttered as though it were wet, and the mate instantly awoke.

"What in flames d'yew want?" he breathed, alert and searching swiftly for his revolver.

"Throw up your haunds!" said the man. "Make a sound an' you're dead as dough-nuts."

The mate held forth his hands and sat bolt up in his bed. He blinked at the light. "Colin Campbell," he growled, "by snakes!"

"That's so."

The poncho slipped from the man's shoulders. He stood erect, his pistol pointed directly at the mate's head, covering him; but there was no sign of fear in the officer's face. He glanced about the small cabin, marking the handicap. "Guess I'm treed," he admitted.

"Mr. Mate," the Scotsman broke in, "I could shoot ye whaur ye sit—I could do it an' get clean off to yon island hell an' no questions asked. But I'm no enamoured o' murder, and so we'll fecht—you an' me."

The mate nodded carelessly, his face set. "Go on!" he urged. "You make me tired."

"A minute," said Campbell, with grim emphasis, "an' ye can rest."

The mate yawned, his hands still held high.

"Ye tauld me once," the Scotsman insisted, "on our passage up fra Callao, that Henderson is no a savoury name on this packet. That's true. I'll tell ye why."

"Lass voyage my brither shipped wi' ye oot o' Vali-paraiso. Ye cheeved him to his death. The second mate, Paddy Flynn, laid him oot wi' his knuckle-dusters, an' he died. Ye mind it? He wass my only brither—an' my mither looed him weel. D'ye mind what I'm sayin' . . . is it no true?"

"Right."

"If," said Campbell, with sudden spleen, "ye'd been the cur yon Flynn wass, I would no have troubled tae explain matters. Ye'd hae died straight an' sudden. Ye'd be dead at this minute." He leaned forward emphasising the words. "Savvy? But ye're a man

foreby your slave-drivin' potentialities, an' I take up your challenge. I'll fecht ye whaur ye will."

"Good."

"Will ye fecht noo?"

"Guess I'll fight yew, sonny, when yew air ready."

"Across this table?" The Scotsman pointed to it.

"Right there."

"Then coom doon fra your bunk an' take your gun."

The mate slid to the deck without flurry. He no longer blinked at the lamp, but turned to place his revolver on the table, precisely as Campbell placed his, and stood waiting.

"When the clock strikes the hoor," said the Scotsman, "pick up an' shoot. Is that tae your likin'?"

"Tew a hair."

The men stood on opposite sides of a table, perhaps three feet wide, and entirely unarmed. Outstretched their hands would easily meet. Yet they remained there, silent, counting the seconds, watching the revolvers—two grim figures, stern, unhesitating, and savagely alert. Five minutes raced into the past, three remained when again the Scotsman spoke.

"If ye have aught tae say," he whispered, "I'm listenin'."

"Nothing," said the mate.

"As ye will."

Two minutes passed. The clock was racing absurdly now. Sixty seconds remained—ten seconds—then a slight whirring broke from its brazen throat, and the men's hands moved towards their revolvers.

Ding!

The clock struck, and instantly two sharp reports leaped upon the silver note and drowned it. The lamplight died—but the shots continued—again, again . . . then a crash, lumbering, like the fall of a sand-bag . . . another, and silence.

\* \* \* \* \*

And the moonlight peering in at the open ports discovered the pair resting there amidst the twisting smoke.





TERMINOLOGICAL EXACTITUDE.

VISITOR (to butler, who is showing him through the picture gallery): That's a fine portrait. Is it an Old Master?

BUTLER: Lor' bless you, no, sir! That's the old missus!

## THE EDITOR'S SCRAP-BOOK.

### THE MELODRAMANIAC.

I have an open countenance,  
A nature blithe and gay;  
I love to laugh and chaff and sing,  
I smile at almost anything—  
But not so at the "play."

When theatre-wards I turn my steps  
Three handkerchiefs I take.  
I love to gasp and throb and weep,  
My hair to bristle, flesh to creep,  
My frame with sobs to shake.

No comedy my fancy thrills,  
Burlesques and farces cloy.  
When Crime in patent-leather boots  
His wife in several places shoots,  
I hug myself with joy.

I like a murder every scene,  
Each act a suicide;  
And when the burglar climbs the sill,  
Bursts ope the safe and burns the will,  
I feel all good inside.

And when at last the curtain falls  
And Hero claims his queen,  
I don my coat with eyes that rain,  
Go, happy, home to dream again  
The splendid things I've seen.

G. Frederic Turner.

HEAD OF FIRM: You are late this morning, sir. I call your attention to the fact that *I* am always in time.

JUNIOR PARTNER: True, sir. But, then, *you* don't have to sit up all the evening with your own daughter, or take her to parties and dances.



MRS. BULLION: I wish I knew something to do that would provide me with an absolutely new sensation.

MR. BULLION: Go out and pay cash for something.



THERE was not even standing room in the crowded railway carriage, but one more passenger, a young woman, wedged her way along just inside the doorway. Each time the train took a sudden lurch forward she fell helplessly across into the arms of a large, comfortable man of the patient, "strap-hanger" class. The third time it happened, he said quietly: "Hadh't you better stay here?"

## THOSE DEAR CHILDREN AGAIN.

If one attempted to deal at large with the answers given by children to examination questions, the editor would probably object that he could not devote the whole magazine to one article, but one or two samples may be given. The son of a well-known bishop was recently asked by his form-master, at a public school, for the meaning of the Parable of the Grain of Mustard Seed.

"It means," said the boy, "that a little religion goes a long way, and those who have least of it here will be highest in the kingdom of heaven." Another, on being asked what was meant by the Salic Law, replied: "The Salic Law provides that no one whose mother was a woman may ascend the throne."

It must, one would think, have been this descendant of Mrs. Malaprop, who, when his mother offered to play at ball with him, replied: "But you can never catch; that's the worst of having a woman for one's mother."

There was something ingenious and reasonable in the reply of little Arthur, aged six, who had succumbed for the second time to the attractions of an exposed and unprotected cake. His mother told him that his first fall ought to have warned him, and pointed the moral of St. Peter and the cock. There came a deep sigh and a quiver of the lips, and then he replied: "But, mamma, the cock in the back street is dead, and you can't expect me to remember St. Peter with a hen."

Sometimes, for all their acuteness, children, like other people, get a trifle mixed, as when the

little girl was told that whenever the bishop, who was coming as a visitor, spoke to her, she was to be sure to say "Your Grace." The bishop duly arrived, but he was somewhat startled, not to say disconcerted, when, on addressing some paternal remark to the little maid, she at once closed her eyes and clasped her hands, saying: "For what we are about to receive, the Lord make us truly thankful." But that was not

quite so bad as the mistake of the Buttons on another occasion of an episcopal visit. His master had impressed upon him the dignity and sanctity of this most important guest, and had told him that if, on knocking at the bishop's door with the hot water in the morning, he was asked: "Who's there?" he was to reply: "The boy, my lord." Unfortunately, in his awe and perturbation, he *did* reply: "The lord, my boy."

Children have a perennial interest in, and curiosity about, their baby brothers and sisters, though this, perhaps, is more true of girls than of boys. For there is a record of one boy who, being asked how he liked his little baby sister, replied: "I'd rather have had a

Newfoundland pup." It was a little girl of three who explained: "Baby has broken a hole in the sky and come through," and another little girl, who, after puzzling her small head as to why baby didn't speak, evolved the beautiful and poetic reason—"I know," she said; "the things that baby saw in God's house before she came to live with us were so wonderful that she cannot speak about them. She's got to be quiet—till she's forgotten."

W. Tarrant.



## HONESTY.

LADY: Baby seems to cry whenever he meets me. Perhaps he doesn't like my hat?

NURSE: No, mum, yer 'at's all right; it's yer face what frightens of 'im, I think.



WHAT THE IMPRESSIONIST HAS TO ENDURE.

ENTHUSIASTIC AMATEUR: Charming—quite, *quite* charming! Such a dear old woman, and such lovely ducks! But wasn't it *rather* a pity to frame it before it was finished?





TO BE QUITE ACCURATE.

GUARD (to passenger about to enter carriage): Can't get in here, sir. Engaged, sir!

PROUD BRIDEGROOM: Excuse me, guard, we were married this morning!

JIMMY: My ma's gone down town to pay some bills.

TOMMY: Pooh! The man comes to the house to collect ours!

EARLY one morning a terribly seasick passenger, pale and hollow-eyed, came out of his stateroom and ran into a lady who was coming along the passage-way, clad in the scantiest raiment. She screamed and started to run. "Don't be alarmed," groaned the man. "Don't be alarmed, madam; I shall never live to tell it."

"My boy, all women are alike. Don't trust any one of them."

"But, father, things are different from when you were a boy. All the women you knew are passed."

"Certainly, my son; but when you are as old as I am, you will find that they've all come back again."

### A COQUETTE.

She laughs at love—preferring adulation—  
And when for one kind word her lovers pray,  
She, quite unmoved by all their agitation,  
Makes light of what they say.

And if they write to her, they fare no better,  
She smiles at all the ardour they display,  
And holding to the flames each fervent letter,  
Makes light of what they say!

R. Mertun.



BACTERIOLOGIST (to his young son): You have been very naughty.

"Please, papa——"

"Say no more. You sit down and count all the germs on that pin-head, and separate them into their classes, even if it takes a month!"



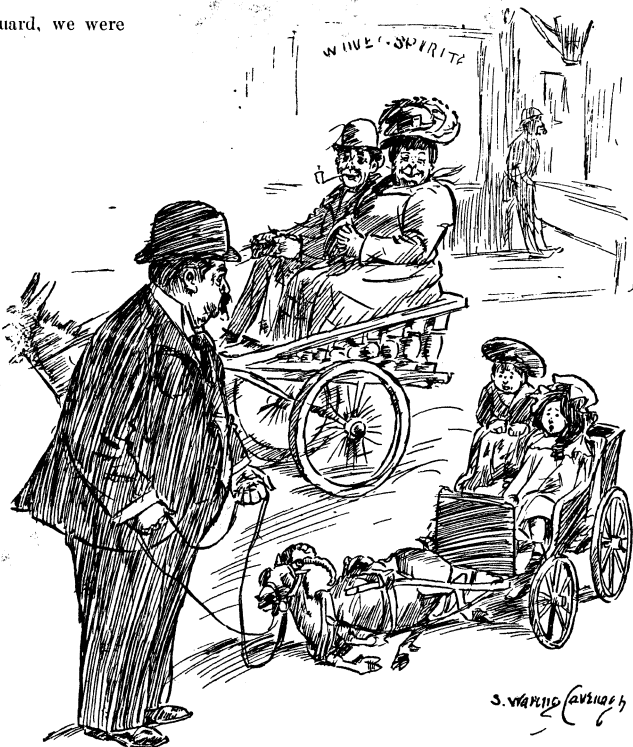
CHILD: Suppose I called you a mean old pig, what would happen?

GOVERNESS: I should tell your father, and he would punish you.

CHILD: And if I only thought it?

GOVERNESS: No harm, so long as you don't say it.

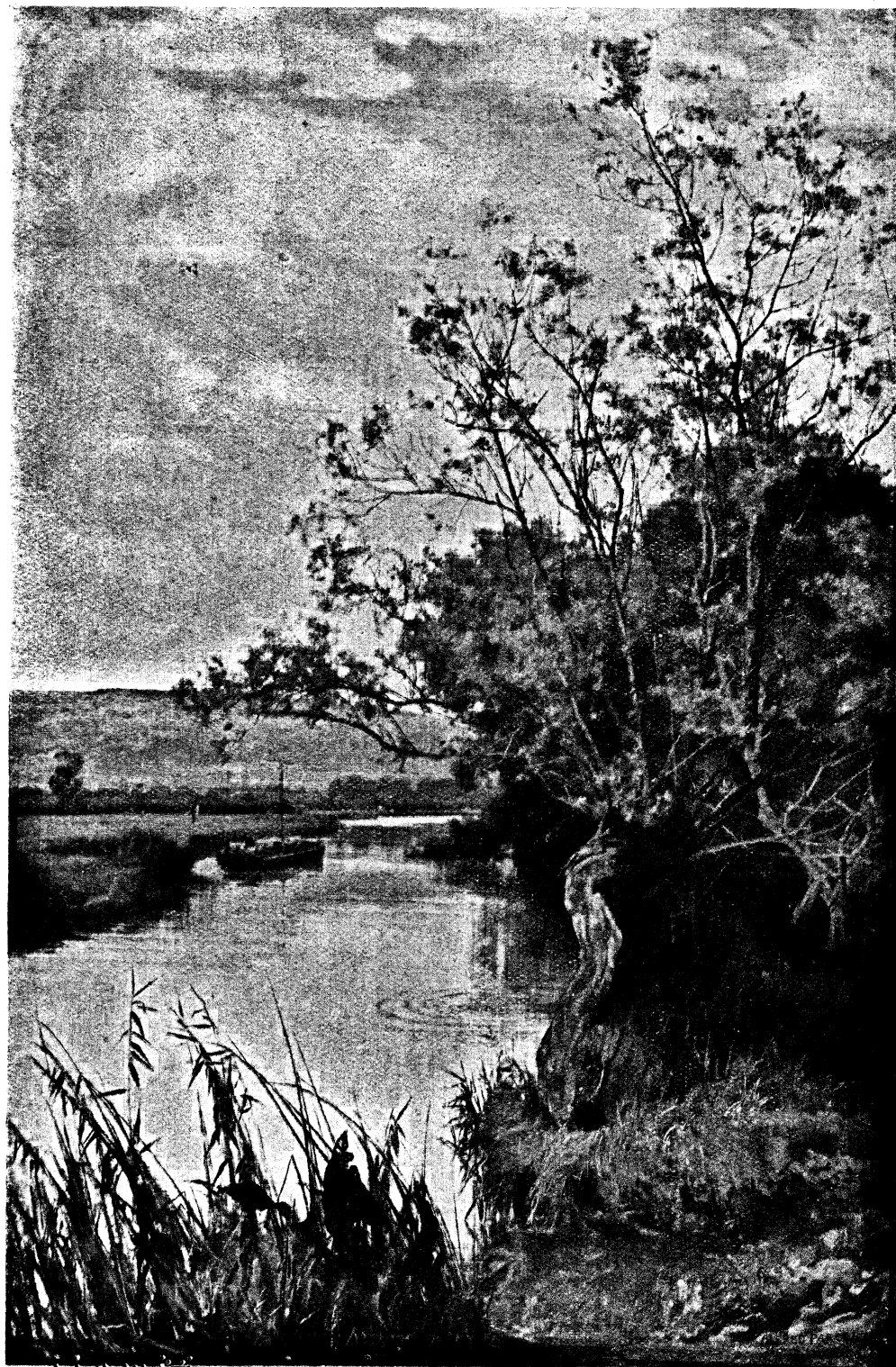
CHILD: Then I only think it.



ADVICE OF THE ROAD.

OWNER OF DONKEY (to owner of goat): Hi! guv'nor, sit on 'is 'ed!





"AN OLD WILLOW BY THE AVON." BY ALFRED PARSONS, A.R.A.

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OF  
MUSEUM



"WHEN NATURE PAINTED ALL THINGS GAY." BY ALFRED PARSONS, A.R.A.

*From the original purchased for the Nation by the Trustees of the Chantrey Bequest.*

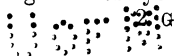
## THE ART OF MR. ALFRED PARSONS, A.R.A.

BY AUSTIN CHESTER.

IN the useful pages of "Who's Who" and in others of the several books which affix dates to the occurrences of those events which, for the information of the curious, are called facts in the lives of famous contemporaries, we read that Alfred William Parsons, A.R.A., R.W.S., landscape painter, son of Joshua Parsons, M.R.C.S., was born at Beckington, Somersetshire, December 2, 1847, and that he was educated at private schools; that in 1865 he was appointed to a clerkship in the Savings Bank Department of the General Post Office; that in 1867 he left Civil Service employment and returned to Somersetshire to study painting, working from Nature without masters; and that his first picture was exhibited in the Royal Academy in 1871. In 1879 he was elected a member of the Committee of the General Exhibition of Water Colour Drawings, and with other members of that Committee, on the dissolu-

tion of that Society, joined the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colour. He left the Royal Institute after some years, and later was elected an Associate and afterwards a Member of the Royal Society of Painters in Water Colours.

Other dates there are given in these same books, such as that, in 1887, Mr. Parsons' picture, "When Nature Painted All Things Gay," was purchased for the nation out of the funds of the Chantrey Bequest; that in 1889 he was awarded gold and silver medals for both oil and water colour paintings exhibited at the Universal Exhibition, Paris; that 1893 gained him similar medals in both Chicago and Munich. But these dates and these facts serve us chiefly as landmarks in the artist's career, and give us little help towards the estimation of the height Mr. Parsons has reached in that art through which his nature shows itself articulate, show us nothing of those years of



anxious unrest when the yeast to give expression to some particular view of, say, the Isle of Avalon, the Ebbor rocks, the Cheddar cliffs, the steep bluffs and low ridges of Brent and Glastonbury, or the more mountainous regions of Brendon and Exmoor with their beacon points, or the grand reaches of the Avon and the Parret, was working in his nature all the time that he was automatically casting up rows of figures in a Government office.

quently poor, whatever may be in the mingled duty and joy of portraying the beauty of the world through the prism of temperament. The aim of the painter is to show to untrained eyes those beauties which, without his help, they fail to see, and in looking through the long list of pictures exhibited by Mr. Parsons in the Royal Academy, the Grosvenor Gallery, and other London exhibitions, we cannot but realise how many lessons we should have lost in



"THE ALLOTMENTS." BY ALFRED PARSONS, A.R.A.

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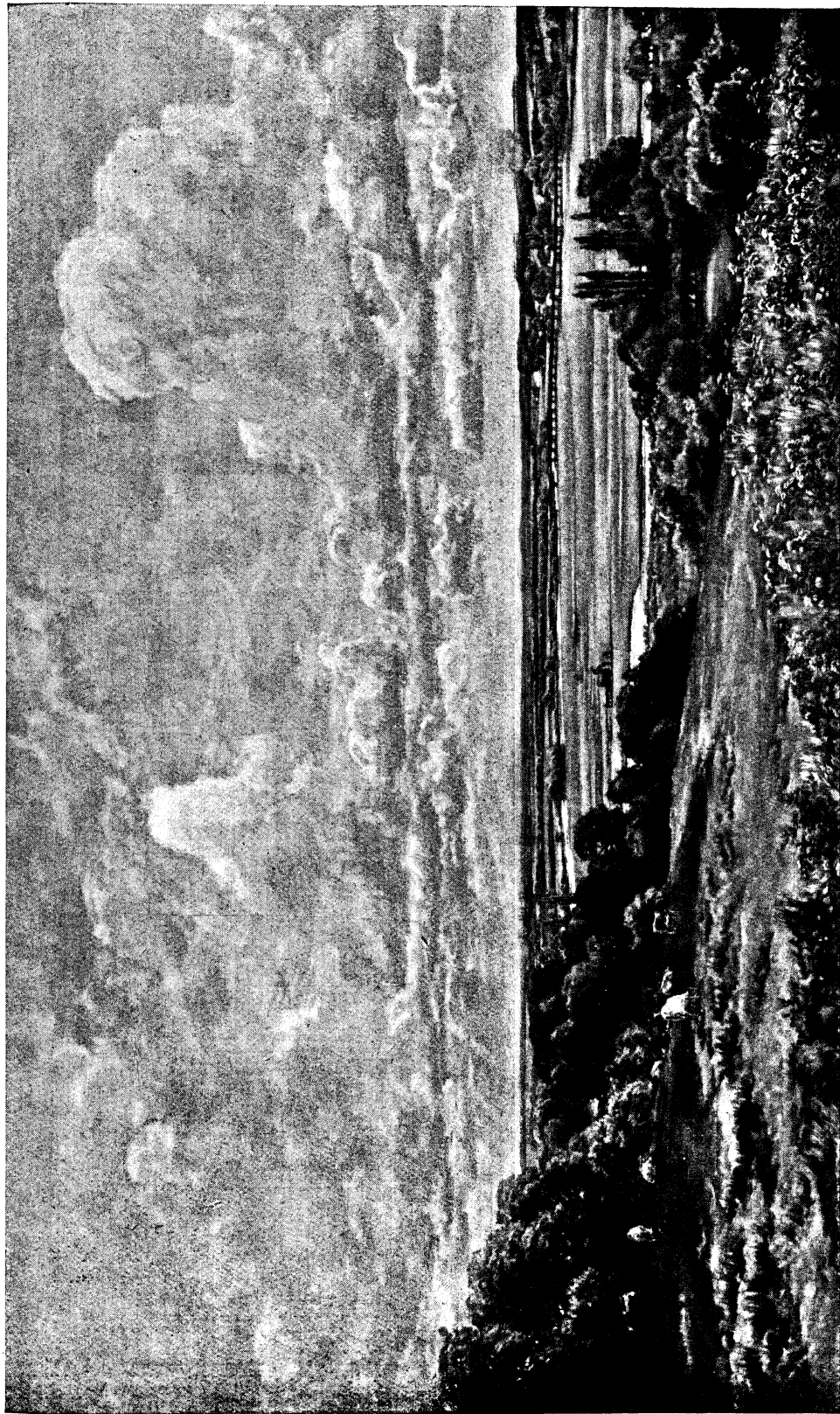
Looking at Mr. Parsons' work to-day, and back upon the admirable record which fills the years that come between 1909 and that first picture exhibited in the Academy in 1871, it is easy enough for us to realise the wisdom of his deliberate overthrow of an assured occupation. But, with that record of artistic work as yet unbegun, it must, in 1867, have required great resolution and much confidence for him to turn his back upon secure remunerative employment, and take up, as a means of livelihood, a profession the results of which are fre-

beauty, and especially in that quality of aerial colour in which Nature abounds, had he followed the career for which he was originally destined.

Mr. Spielmann speaks of Mr. Parsons as painting "rich river scenery with careful regard for actuality and with much minuteness and exquisiteness of detail, especially in the rendering of flowers"; but we must know more of the artist's temperament and its affinities if we would fully understand those close, tender, yet indestructible bonds of sympathy by which the nature of this







"THE THAMES ABOVE WARGRAVE." BY ALFRED PARSONS, A.R.A.

READING, SONNING, AND SHUPLAKE MILL, WHERE THE LONDON JOINS THE THAMES, ARE SEEN IN THE DISTANCE.  
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"APPLE BLOSSOMS." BY ALFRED PARSONS, A.R.A.

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painter is especially knit to the physical beauties of the land.

Neither generalisation nor record of bare dates has power to carry a description that will give us any idea of either the temperament or character of the man to whom they are applied, for to have a true relish and to form a right judgment of a subject—and here we are dealing with a special man as subject—"the fancy of the writer must be warm to retain the print of

but, unlike many, he can talk also, and almost equally interestingly, on other themes.

Mr. Parsons' art is the product of delicate selection; it is rich in character, peculiarly personal, full of light, acquired by a nice differentiation of plain values, and full of suggestion of air. With rarely gifted sensitiveness he lays upon canvas the impress made upon him by some scene revealed under special conditions. Thus, in looking at his pictures, we have no difficulty in imagining ourselves

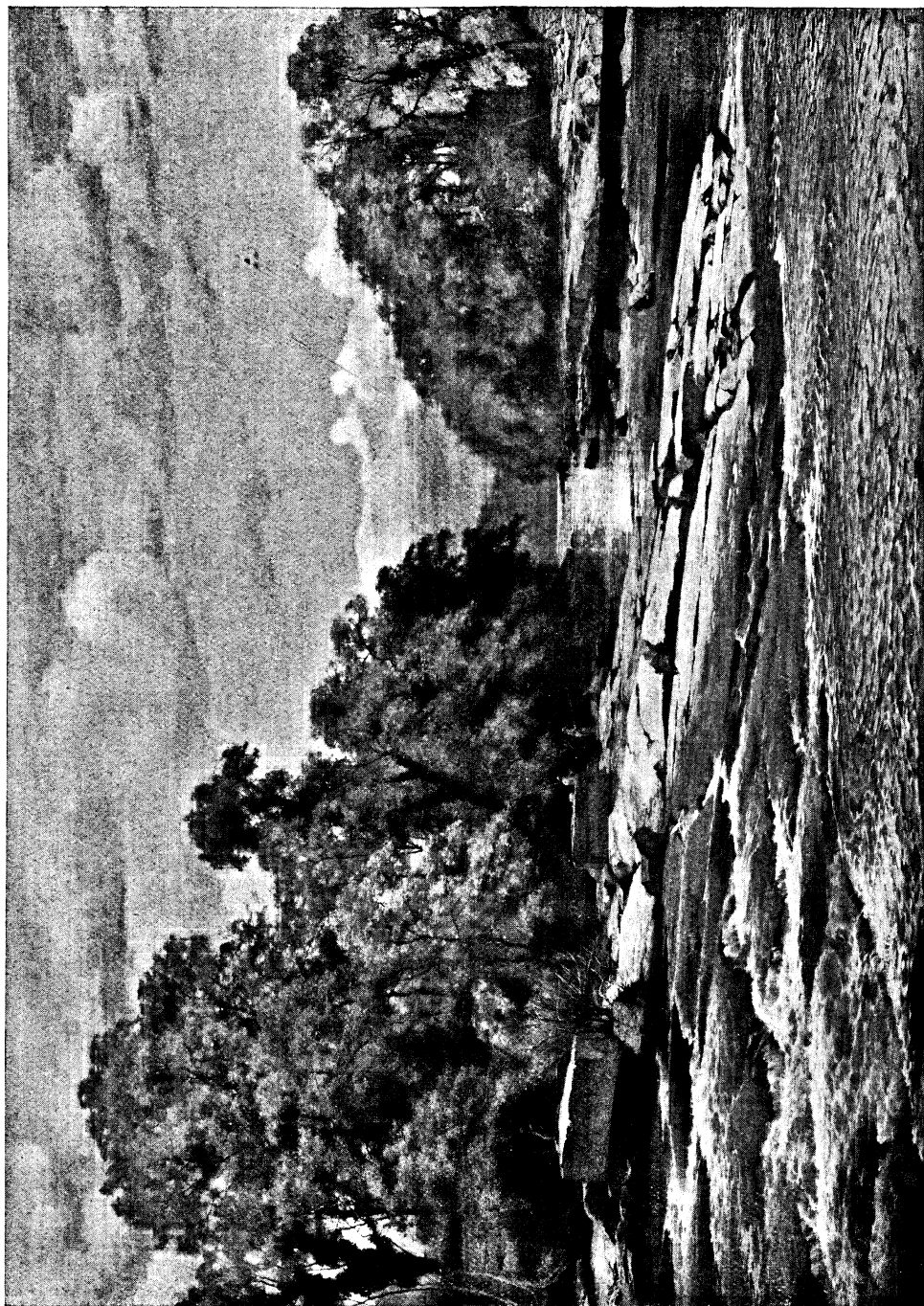


"THE STAR THAT BIDS." BY ALFRED PARSONS, A.R.A.

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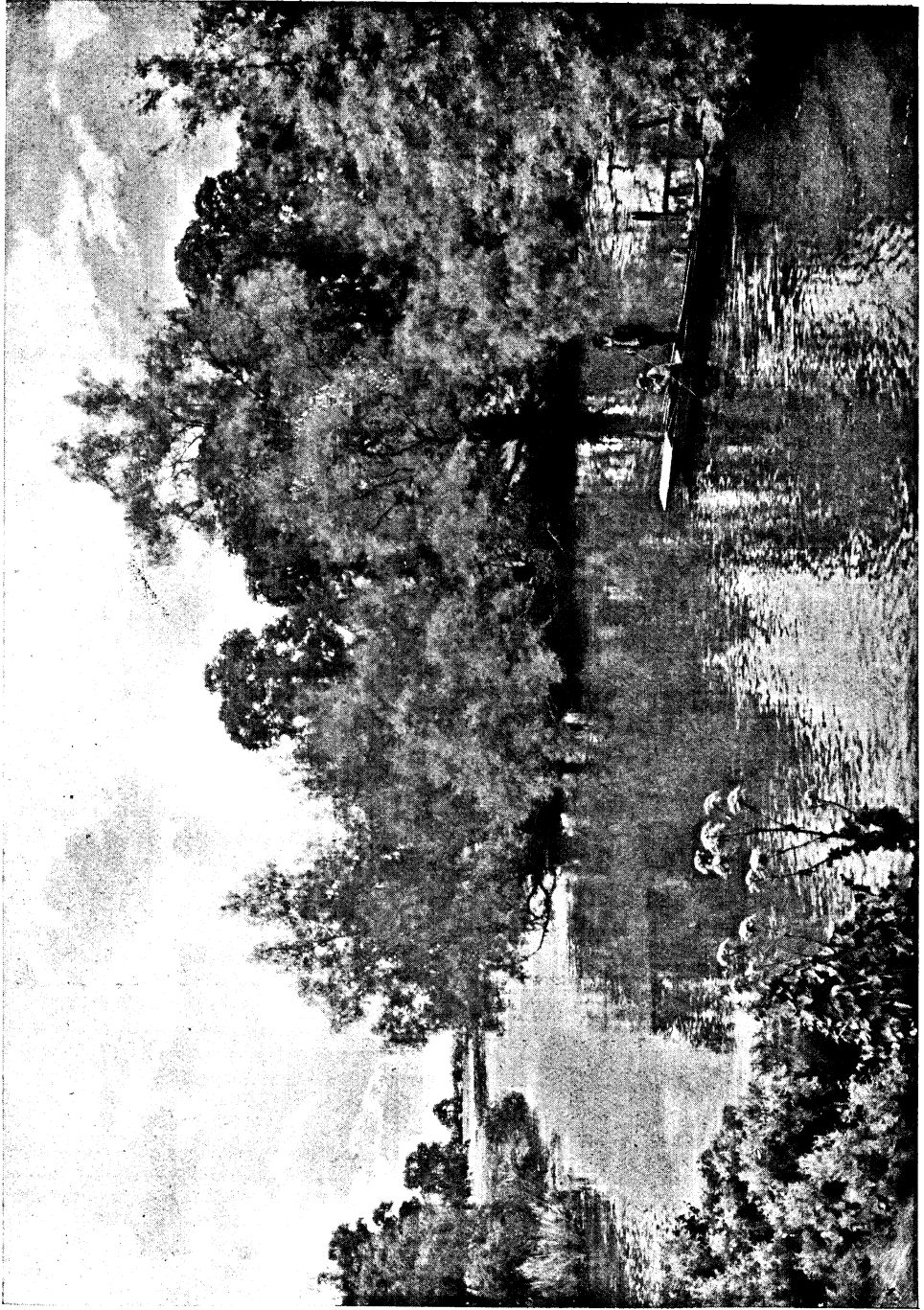
those images it has received from its subject; and the judgment of discerning, to know what expressions are most proper to clothe and adorn it to the best advantage." We do not flatter ourselves that we have that "judgment discerning" that can translate into words any of the beauties of Mr. Parsons' pictorial art, but we have the "fancy, warm to retain" the imprints of those images which talk with him as left upon our brain; for, like many painters, he can talk most interestingly about his art,

sauntering through England's delectable meadow-lands, or by the margins of her ever-running waters. "The Hills near Goodwood," "Clay Hill from Longleat Park," "A Willow Brook which Turns a Mill," "The Millhead," "The Shores of Shannon," "The Valley of the Thames," "The Junction of the Greta and the Tees," these and many other kindred subjects have each offered themselves as contributions to his art, and he has found in Scotland, in Wales, in England, in New England, in France,



"THE LAST DAY OF SALMON." BY ALFRED PARSONS, A.R.A.

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"THE GREEN PUNT." BY ALFRED PARSONS, A.R.A.  
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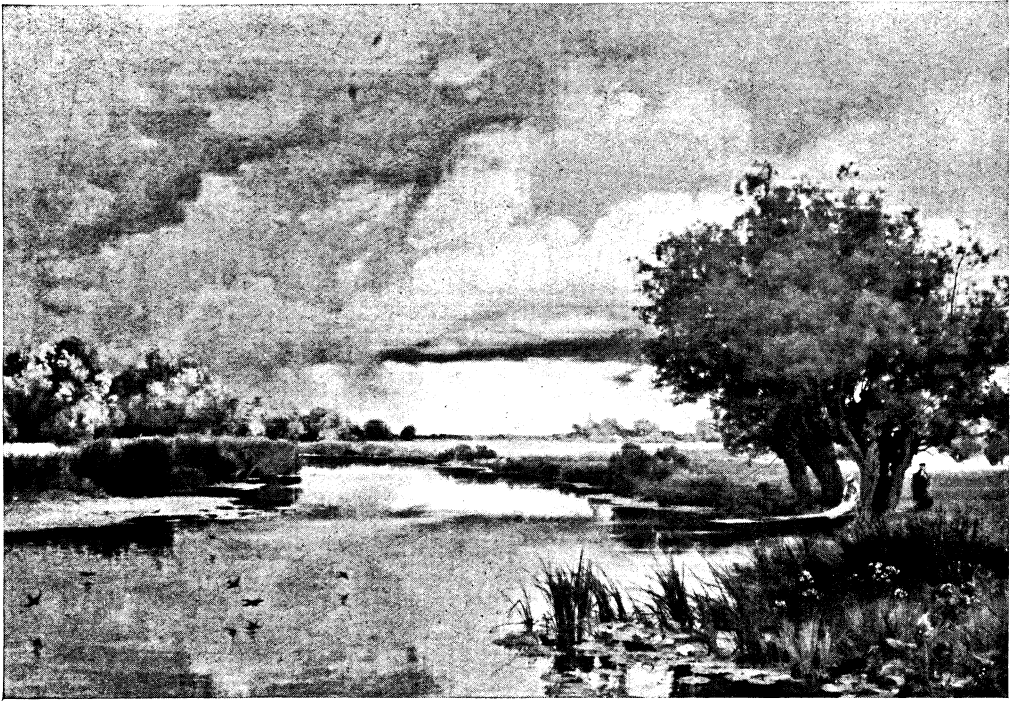


in Savoy, and in Japan, subjects which have lent themselves to that spiritual vision through which he seems especially privileged to see even the prosaic.

Mr. Parsons is, *par excellence*, a painter of gardens, of those gardens which, taken tenderly to the bosom of old, brown Mother Earth, are perennially young, carry their many years with staid dignity, yet show infinite abundance, infinite sweetness, and infinite fragrance, in reward of man's care.

He, too, in his work, shows us that he feels with Francis Bacon that it was God

no smell as they grow, rosemary little, nor sweet marjoram." That "that which, above all others, yields the sweetest smell in the air is the violet, specially the white double violet, which comes twice a year, about the middle of April and about Bartholomew-tide." That "next to that is the musk rose, then the strawberry leaves dying, with a most excellent cordial smell." That then comes the flower of the vines; that "it is a little dust like the dust of a bent, which grows upon the cluster in the first coming forth. Then sweetbriar, then wallflowers,



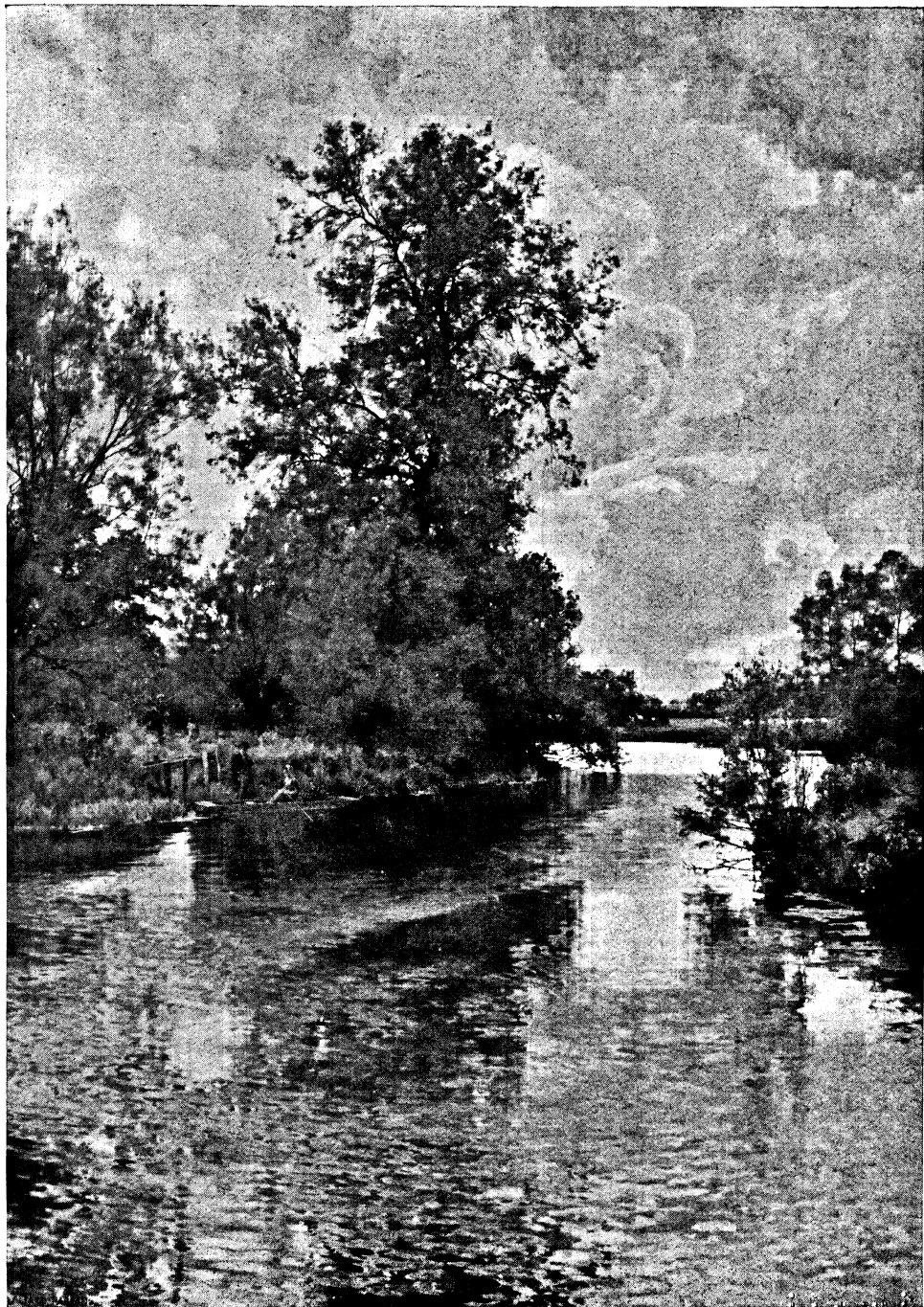
"CALM BEFORE STORM." BY ALFRED PARSONS, A.R.A.

*Reproduced by permission of the Artist.*

Almighty who first planted a garden; that it is indeed the purest of human pleasures, the greatest refreshment to the spirit of man, for that the breath of flowers, coming and going like the warbling of music, is far sweeter when growing in the air than when held in the grasp of the hand. He, too, is intimately knowledgable in plants; he, too, is conversant with all the secrets of a garden, knows that "roses, damask and red, are fast flowers of their smells, so that you may walk by a whole row of them, and find nothing of their sweetness; yea, though it be in a morning dew." That "bays likewise yield

which are very delightful to be set under a parlour or lower chamber window. Then pinks and gillyflowers, specially the matted pink and clove gillyflower. Then the flowers of the lime tree. Then the honeysuckles, so they be somewhat afar off. Of beanflowers I speak not, because they are field flowers. But those which *perfume* the air most delightfully, not passed by as the rest, but being trodden upon and crushed, are three—that is burnet, wild thyme, and water-mints. Therefore, you are to set whole alleys of them to have the pleasure when you walk or tread."

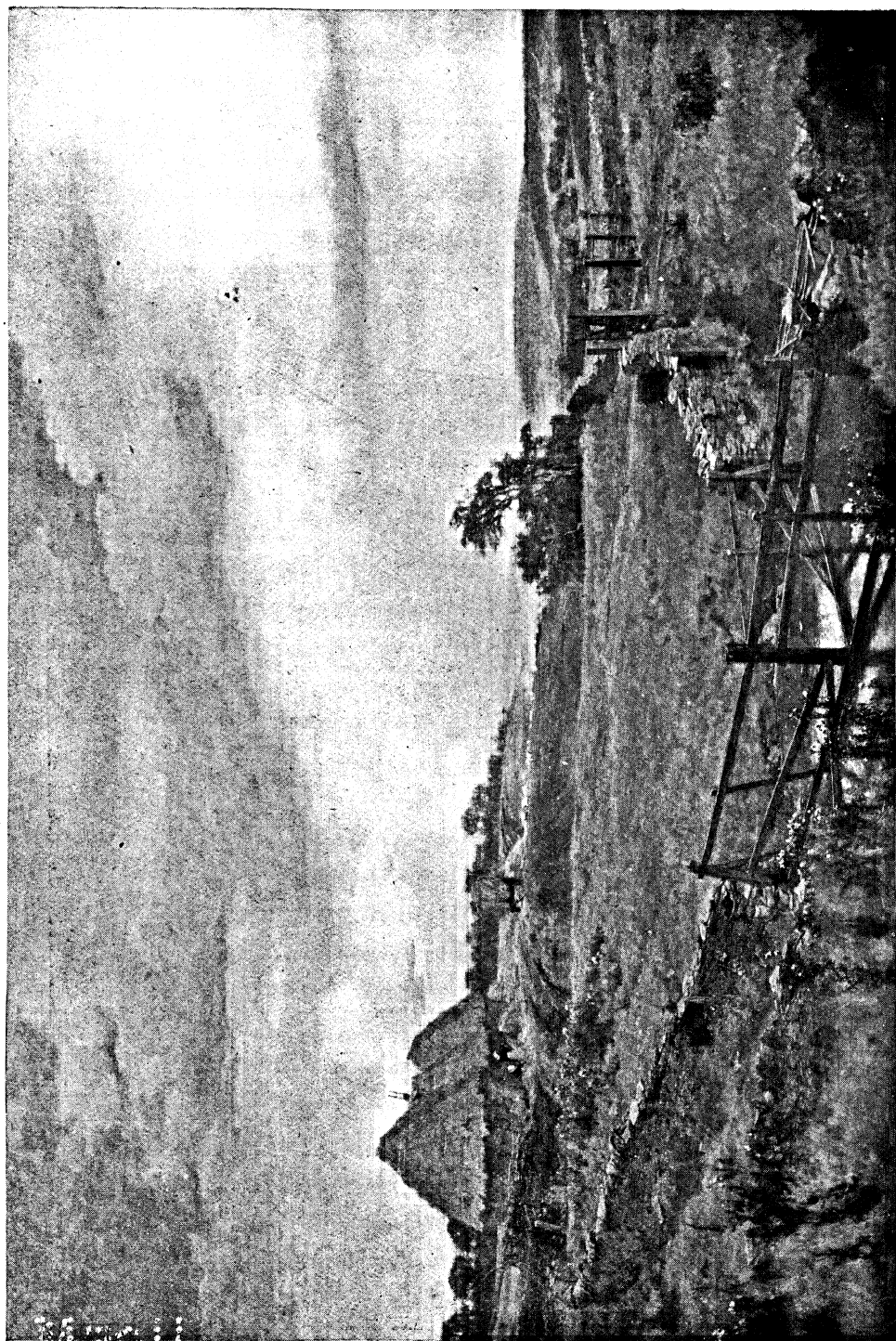
And Mr. Parsons has fused the gaiety



"BROWN AUTUMN." BY ALFRED PARSONS, A.R.A.

*From the original in the Public Art Gallery, St. Louis, U.S.A.*





"MOONRISE ON THE COTSWOLDS." BY ALFRED PARSONS, A.R.A.

*From the original in the Public Art Gallery, Oldham, reproduced by permission of the Art Gallery Committee.*

of flowers into close intimacy with the more sombre aspects of the wilder nature which backs them as to form, pictorially, as it were, one shield with its different sides; for we walk with him by aid of his art, not only amidst *parterres*, but in orchards, in arbours, and by the margins of lakes, fountains, and "such pleasant like places." Careful of form, eternally conscious of values, his pictures show an intuitive feeling for composition, for the small individual truths of those gay flower-borders of which he has painted so many are, by their technical accomplishment, ever kept subservient to the larger truths of a picture as a sympathetic whole. He has painted gardens smiling in the sun, laughing in the breeze, and the love of poetry, which is as natural to him as love of the sister art, is demonstrated by the lines attached to each of such canvases.

The visit to Japan persuaded Mr. Parsons to join the art of the pen to that of the brush, and a book published in 1896, entitled

"Notes in Japan," confirms us in the opinion that only an artist is capable of recording those things which are of real interest, because he has his eyes open to objects invisible to the ordinary traveller. Richard of Musgrave declares it the province of art to furnish the public with stories, but from our enjoyment of Mr. Parsons' book on Japan, we should rather insist that it is the province of the artist to furnish the public with guide-books. Who but such a one could convey the impression made upon him by the luxuriant, mist-like bloom of the plum trees in the orchards of Kōbe, or of the

effect produced upon the vision by the rows of beans and pale green barley, growing on the steep slopes backed by the snow-covered mountains, in the islands of Kin Shiu and Shikoku, and yet, at the same time, remember to tell us how in Japan he was struck by the scarcity of ground flowers, and conjure in contrast up to our mental vision a picture of English meadows gay with buttercups, daisies, and cowslips?

"Notes in Japan" is illustrated by sketches of the Inland sea, the hills near Kōbe, of early plum blossoms, of giant wisteria trees, the snaky stems of which are shown us in

their writhed forms upon the ground, and twisted to the tops of neighbouring alien trees. We follow Mr. Parsons from Kōbe to Nara, and are there shown the cherry and magnolia trees in bloom, and the gardens of tea-houses and temples gay with azalea, camellia, magnolia, and the young leaves of the maple and andromeda. In the chapter on Nara, Mr. Parsons arrests the steps of his wanderings to invade the

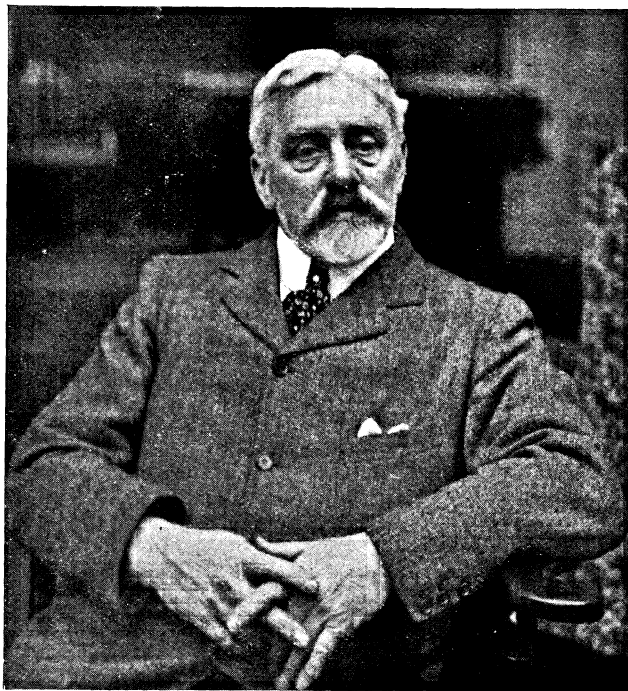


Photo by]

[The London News Agency.

MR. ALFRED PARSONS, A.R.A.

complexities of the Japanese landscape gardener's art, a subject peculiarly interesting to him since he, in the gardens of Welbeck and of many other places, has shown himself an adept in English landscape gardening.

At Hikone Mr. Parsons stopped to place its castle on record in line, just as in wash he recorded that of Nagoyi, as already in the same medium he had recorded that near Kōbe. He rested at Tennenji, made some charming sketches looking back to Hikone across Lake Biwa, and of the azaleas, which flourish over the land as do our dog-roses in



"THE RAIN IS OVER AND GONE." BY ALFRED PARSONS, A.R.A.  
*From the original in the McCulloch Collection, reproduced by permission of Mrs. Coutis Michie.*





"POPLARS." BY ALFRED PARSONS, A.R.A.  
*From the original in the Public Art Gallery, Aberdeen, reproduced by permission of the Directors.*

June. It was the time of the locust and of the lilies and hydrangeas, and the many beautiful flowers of summer attracted him in his character of botanist to their study, for Mr. Parsons is a botanist of no mean proficiency; and here, digressing from the book of his wanderings in Japan, we note an important work, upon the illustration of which he has been engaged for many years. This work, under some such title as "The Evolution of the Rose," will ultimately be published by Mr. Murray.

Travel, according to Balzac, is gastronomy of the eye—a gastronomy really to be enjoyed when the artistic appetite and digestion have been very good, as in the case of Mr. Parsons. He has brought the sharp sight of a Nature-lover's eyes to bear upon the beauties of the world, and such eyes

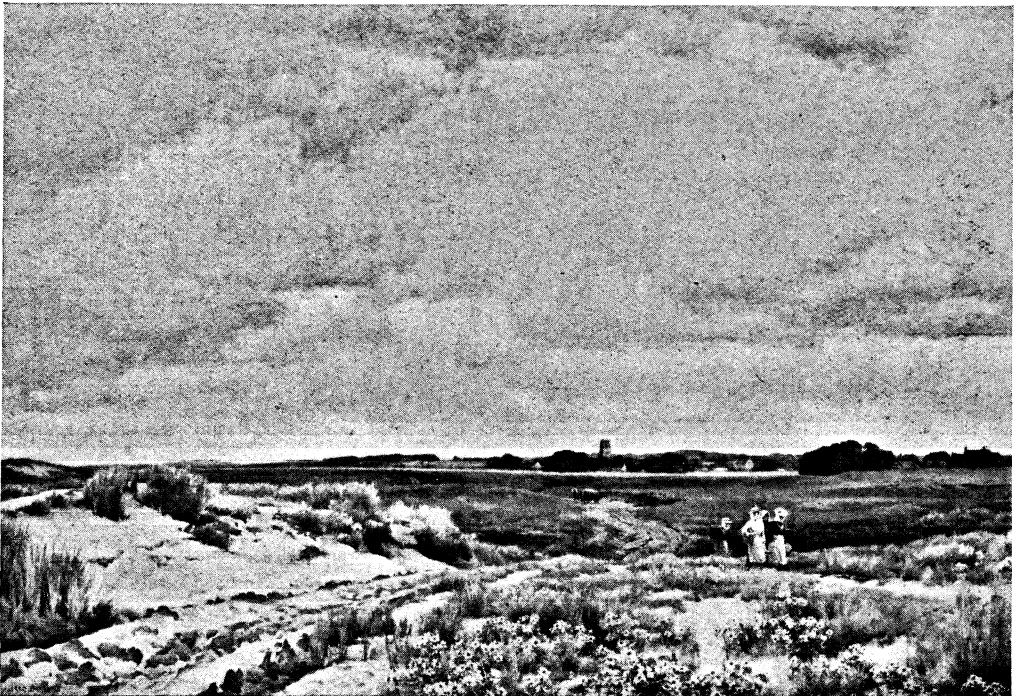
See more than any other eyes can see,

and in this sight the gardener in him comes out very strongly.

The charm of Mr. Parsons' book has enticed us into lingering over it longer than we should have done had such lingering not been pictorially justified by the fact that his picture in last year's Academy owed its

origin to the nine months the painter spent in the Land of Chrysanthemums, and that the whole pictorial result of those wanderings has been exhibited at the Fine Arts Society in London, St. Botolph's Club in Boston, U.S.A., and in the galleries of the American Art Association in New York.

Mr. Parsons, apart from his particular art, is a man of varied experience, of great intelligence, and of very considerable reading. He has worked with accomplishment in black and white, illustrating a book of "Old Songs," "Wordsworth's Sonnets," and "A Quiet Life" (in conjunction with Mr. E. A. Abbey, R.A.). He has also collaborated with "Q"—Mr. A. T. Quiller Couch—in a book on the Warwickshire Avon; and in yet another on the Danube, "From the Black Forest to the Black Sea," where that love of wandering which has helped to make his taste so catholic, led him in company with Mr. Millet. And no lover of the works of Richard Doddridge Blackmore can ever forget Mr. Parsons' exquisite landscapes in "Springhaven," that delightful romance which its author himself rated more highly than his own more famous "Lorna Doone."



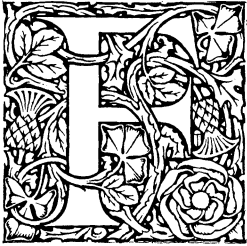
"THE ROAD TO THE SHORE." BY ALFRED PARSONS, A.R.A.

*Reproduced by permission of the Artist.*

# THE CONFESSION OF FLORIS HEENVLIET.

By MARJORIE BOWEN,

*Author of "The Viper of Milan."*



FLORIS HEENVLIET was skating along the canal that runs from Delft to Rotterdam. He had his back to the former town, which was where he lived, but he had not yet come so far that he could see

the houses of Rotterdam, or even the spires of the big churches with their lead cupolas visible as far as Schiedam.

It was late afternoon, cold and lonely.

Floris had passed no one since he had left his uncle's house in the Koornmarkt, and he was glad. He was skating in face of the wind, he had his fur collar turned up, his cap pulled low, and his hands in his pockets.

It was delightful to feel his body swing forward without exertion or fatigue, to feel the ice spinning away from under his feet, to see the long canal ever widening before him, and to hear the solitary yet homely sound of the wind that blew back his coat and seemed to be struggling to lift up his cap, that it might whisper something in his ear.

On either side the flat, bare country was lying under a white salt mist that became grey in the distance and mingled with the sombre-coloured sky.

Floris skated through field after field, where the canal was edged by spears of broken grass, and low bushes, bearing glittering lines of snow, bent over the frozen tow-path, and beyond this nothing but the straight line of the land merging into the mist.

Then he passed windmills with the date painted in large letters under the thatch, and the sails turning briskly, and in the distance he could sometimes see another windmill—a grey shape that did not catch the wind, but was still as a painting on the background of the mist.

He smiled to think that he had ever been tired, and yet in the perfect exaltation of his body, in the joy of the swift motion and the

keen air, he thought of fatigue and weariness, and even now and then of death.

He went between scattered houses built down close to the water, with their own little wooden landing-stages, on which stood familiar objects—a pair of sabots, a pile of logs, or even a cat walking cautiously.

He passed a trim villa, the red bricks mortared with lines of white, one window open and a rich Persian cloth of glowing colours hanging out, and on the roof a crow.

These things flew past, and he was in the bare, open country again.

Because he was so utterly alone and untrammelled, he felt as if he was being watched, and in the complete silence he distinguished voices that he never heard at other times.

He knew what they said perfectly well, and that they spoke the truth; he smiled in his collar and wondered.

He did not believe in remorse—he believed in no emotion once other men had put a name to it—yet he had experienced most feelings, and his cynicism had saved him very little.

He thrust his hands deeper into his pockets and hunched his shoulders up to his ears. Was this remorse? Did the wind and the loneliness and the white mist fill him with remorse?

It was foolish to suppose so. What had these things to do with his inner feelings?

No, it was not remorse.

He skated past another windmill. A bird flew up out of the grass, darted up, then down again.

Ugh, how cold it was!

A deeper shade seemed to be falling over the landscape.

Floris straightened his shoulders and raised his eyes.

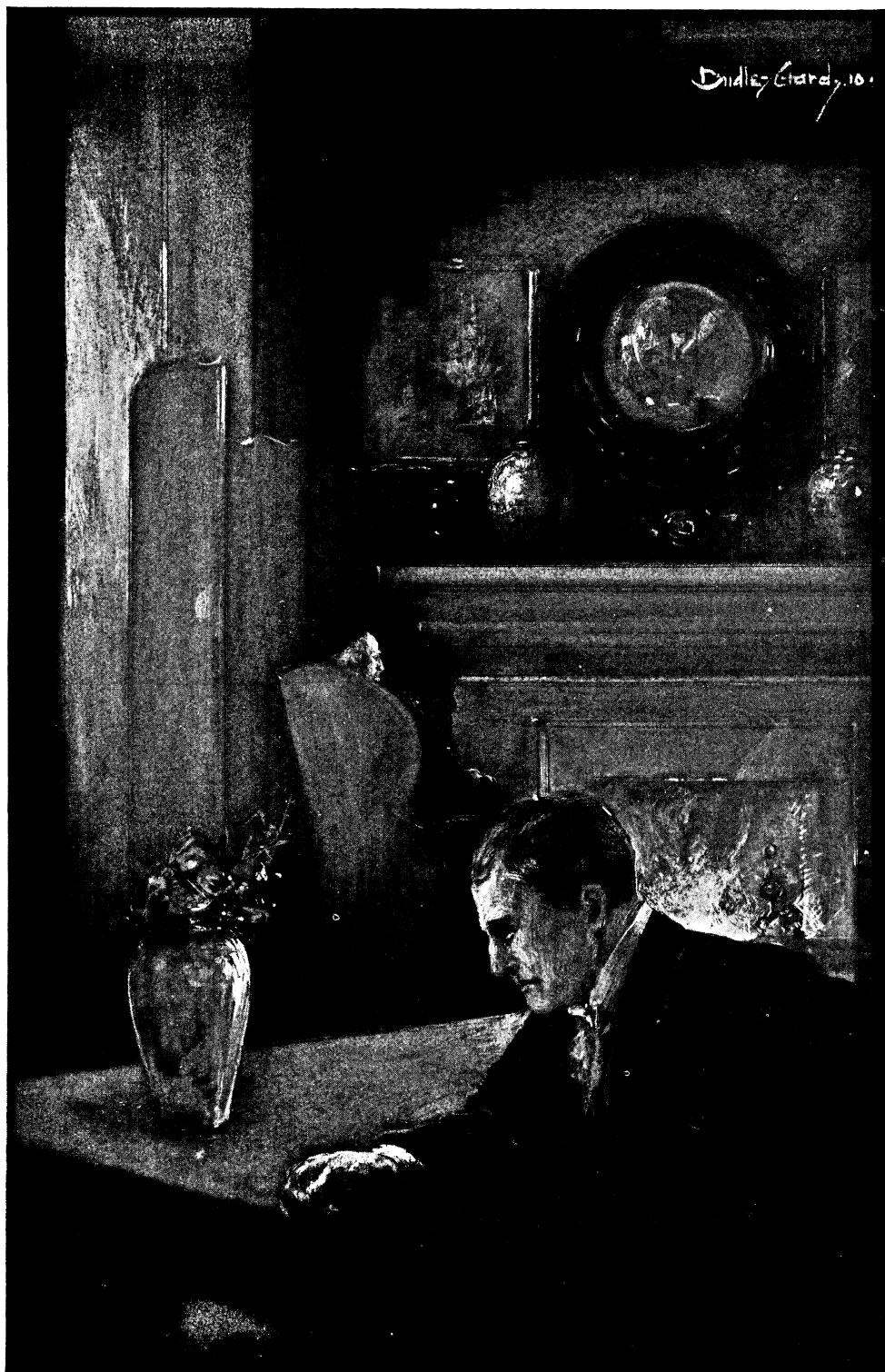
Ahead of him was the sun, red and hard and sullen, hanging above the towers of Schiedam.

The short winter day was nearly over. He made a graceful sweeping curve on the ice, and turned towards Delft.

No, it was not remorse, he said to himself, but pride.

He wished to show that he could do with-





“‘I want to confess.’”

out these things—comforts, luxuries, the respect of the neighbours, the prospect of an easy and wealthy future, the affection of his uncle, even his good name and the love of Elizabeth Van Decken.

Yes, he was eager to show that these things, for the sake of which he had lost his honour, were really nothing to him, and that he could sacrifice them all.

But to whom was he eager to show it? Who would care? Everyone would scorn him if he confessed.

Then it was a strange kind of pride, because there was no one to admire him, or be convinced, or hold him justified.

Except, perhaps, Heaven.

He skated between the fields, the wind-mills, and the houses.

He would lose everything; let him consider that. People would turn their backs on him—even Elizabeth. He would have to leave Delft.

Perhaps his cousin, the man whom he had wronged and whose memory he would right, if he confessed, might have said a good word for him, but, he being dead, there was no other, Floris reflected, with an unreasonable sneer.

Then why did he think of confessing, since he would gain nothing, but lose everything, since he did not feel remorseful towards the man whom he had ruined?

He asked himself, bending his head before the veering wind.

There was no answer.

It was an impulse turning into a resolution. He felt impelled to confess as he had never felt impelled to anything in his life.

The canal broadened before him; he could see the towers of St. Ursula and the Oude Kerk rising above the bare trees; he passed little houses with painted shutters and the dark building of the arsenal, where the arms of the Republic frowned from the stone.

A few flakes of snow began to fall.

An old woman going along the towpath recognised his slender, graceful figure as it sped along, and called out a greeting.

He answered her over his shoulder and hurried on.

Now he had entered the town; either side of him was the high brick pavement planted with bare lime trees, and beyond the plain red houses, with the lights appearing here and there in the windows.

Floris thought of the last time that he had skated through Delft, one arm round Elizabeth's waist, holding, with the other hand, hers in its fur glove on his breast, her

hooded head on his shoulder, and their feet keeping perfect time on the shining ice.

When he had almost reached the end of the Koornmarkt, he stopped, sat down on the edge of the pavement, took off his skates, and tied them together as he had done a hundred times before. No one would have imagined that any deep thought or extraordinary resolve lay under his demeanour as he passed into his uncle's quiet house in the shadow of the Oude Kerk.

A passer-by on the other side of the canal saw just Mynheer Floris Van Heenvliet going home; Floris himself, as he passed under the portico, was thinking that nothing would ever be the same again after he had said what he was going to say.

He took off his cap and shook the snow-flakes from it, and got out of his coat.

Anna, the housekeeper, came down the black-and-white tiled hall.

"It is beginning to snow again," she said. "I am glad you have come back. You have been gone a long time."

Floris gave her his cap, coat, and skates.

"Where is my uncle?" he asked.

"In the parlour—waiting for you, Mynheer Floris."

"Very well." He put his hand to his hair, which was damp and clinging to his brow, then thrust his finger inside his black cravat, as if he wished to loosen it.

"I will bring a light," said old Anna.

"No"—he lowered his dark eyes and gazed at the black-and-white pattern of the tiles—"do not bring a light—yet, Anna. I will ring when we need the lamp."

"But you cannot see," she protested.

"It does not matter—I want to speak to my uncle——"

He saw she was looking at him curiously, and he flushed.

"Yes, I want to speak to my uncle . . . and it will do as well . . . better in the dark."

"Well, we will have a light in the door, or the neighbours will wonder——"

She turned off, then paused and looked back.

"Are not Mejufvrouw Elizabeth and her mother coming to supper?"

Floris stared.

"You told me so yourself," said old Anna, quite angrily.

"Yes, of course . . . they are coming."

Anna looked at him crossly; she was annoyed by his vacant ways and his whim about the light.

"I hope you will have finished by then,"

she answered, "for one cannot show people into the dark."

"I shall have finished by then," said Floris.

After Anna had gone, he stood with his hand on the parlour door.

How difficult words were! Now he came to consider it, he could not recall having ever put anything vital into words.

What had he said when he had asked Elizabeth to be his wife?

He had written a letter; he had spoken to her father; it had been understood between them before his awkward, broken sentences had won her loving consent. Well, that was no help to him now. . . .

He had to open this door, enter the familiar parlour, and empty his soul to the old man who would be sitting within.

He pressed his brow against the lintel of the doorpost, shivered, and set his teeth; then he heard Anna returning with the lamp for the hall, and, goaded by this, he turned the handle.

Softly entering, he closed the door behind him.

The room was brightly lit with firelight; in a high-backed chair by the hearth sat his uncle, with his face half towards the fire and half concealed by the sides of the chair.

Floris was seized with a terror lest he should look round and break the silence with some cheerful commonplace.

For that would make everything impossible.

"Uncle," he said, in a quick, low voice, "it is I, Floris! Do not look at me—nor speak to me . . . I want to say something . . . it is very difficult."

He sat down at the table and hid his face in his hands, for he knew Mynheer Heenvliet must instinctively look round, and he did not want to see his expression of wonder and alarm.

After waiting a little, he spoke again.

"Will you sit as you are, looking into the fire . . . and listen to me? How impossible it is to explain! I went skating this afternoon, out through the Rotterdam Gate, as far as Schiedam . . . I made a resolution . . . I want to confess."

He raised his eyes and saw his uncle leaning back in the deep chair, motionless.

"Perhaps I can speak like this, in the dark, if you do not say anything or—look at me . . . It is about your son I am going to speak . . . my cousin Hendrick."

He drew a deep breath, and strove to probe the very depths of his own meaning.

"I do not know why I am confessing . . . I do not know . . . because I do not love my cousin any more than I ever did . . . I have nothing to gain."

He drew his handkerchief from his pocket and wiped his brow and lips; he fixed his eyes on the dark walls, the well-known pictures, the blue-and-white curtains, the chimney-piece, with its dull mirror, ornaments of blue-and-white Delft, and black marble clock.

All these things had become strange and far away; he felt giddy, confused by the shadows that were blotting everything out.

Even the firelight, it seemed, for the logs were flaring fitfully and sinking into ashes.

Floris clenched his hands on the table, forcing the words out of himself.

"I was always jealous of Hendrick—because he was your heir, and I was poor, with no claim on you . . . and I was cleverer than he. I found that out when we were clerks together . . . in your counting-house . . . in Amsterdam . . . He was foolish enough to be always getting into trouble . . . and I was clever enough to make the most of it . . ."

A sound like a sigh broke from the old man.

"Do not say anything!" cried Floris. "I am going to tell you all. . . . You began to find his accounts were wrong, and he could not explain—" The speaker's voice sank lower. "I did it . . . it was very easy."

The firelight seemed to be sinking rapidly; only a faint, pulsing glow remained over the figure of Mynheer Heenvliet.

"That was the beginning," continued Floris, leaning heavily on the table and staring at the dull patch of window, against which the hastening snow was drifting. "Then one day he came to me and told me that he was tired of it . . . I was the favourite, and he was always in your displeasure. I knew why—I had taken pains it should be so . . . yet you had trusted him with a large amount of money to be conveyed to the bank at Utrecht. . . . Well, he was going away, he told me. Since then I have often wondered why he should make a confidant of me; but he was always simple . . . he thought I was honourable. Do not speak! . . . I am telling you that I am not honourable."

He paused, clenching his hand tightly before him on the smooth, shining table, where he had often arranged the ranks of his lead soldiers when he was a child, or

opened the great black-letter Bible on Sundays and gazed at the terrible woodcut of the Last Judgment.

He did not see anything—not even Mynheer Heenvliet. He was utterly absorbed in getting this thing into words; he wondered he could do it; he wondered why he was doing it. Still, cold and sick, he went on, forcing his soul to penance.

“Hendrick gave me the money and a letter for you; he would not be beholden for a ducat . . . He ran away and joined the merchant service, as you know.”

Floris shuddered, as if the snow falling softly against the pane was drifting on to his bare heart.

“Listen! I burnt the letter and I buried the money.

“You thought he had robbed you and disgraced you . . . and I—thought . . . ‘He is a fool. What does it matter?’”

The logs fell together with a little empty sound.

Floris gave a groan.

“What does it matter? Oh, Heavens, I do not know, but I must speak! Hush! hear me to the end. You disinherited him—as I meant you should—and I was your heir . . . You cursed him; now you will curse me. . . . Listen! I am confessing. He was never to blame. . . . When he died . . . in China, I laughed to think how safe I was. No one knew . . . except Heaven. We have been happy together—you and I. I have pleased you better than he could ever have done. . . . Am I not a fool to confess? That is all. . . . I did not think that I could ever bring these words over my lips; but it is done. . . .

“I will go away . . . you must tell Elizabeth . . . It would be better if I were dead, for I love her . . . I do not ask you to forgive me, even to speak to me.

“I am going now . . .”

His head sank lower and lower, until it rested on the edge of the table.

The marble clock gave a little whirr and struck six.

The clear strokes fell echoing into the dark stillness. In the distance the Stadhuis clock was chiming, then that from the Oude Kerk sounded close, deep and earnest.

Floris dragged himself into a sitting posture.

“Elizabeth will hate me . . . It always seemed to me that she would have loved . . . him . . . if he had stayed . . . Elizabeth . . .”

He rose, staggering, and flung out his hand against the wall to support himself.

“I am going.” He bit his weak lips.

A door opened and closed somewhere. His head was reeling; he had to lean against the wall, for his limbs were trembling and weak.

Voices, footsteps, sounded from without.

He tried to find his way to the door, when it was opened swiftly by a girl carrying a candle.

The picture of light, life, and happiness which she made blinded him; he stood with his hand over his eyes.

“What is the matter, Floris?”

She smiled, holding up the candle, whose beams glittered in her fair hair.

“How cold you have let the room get! Ah, the fire is nearly out. And why are you in the dark, Floris?”

She went lightly round to the hearth.

“Elizabeth,” he said miserably, “I am going; my uncle will speak to you.”

“What do you mean?”

She was by the old man’s chair, and bent over it as she spoke.

“He is asleep,” she smiled. “Come, Mynheer, wake up and tell me what Floris means.”

She shook him by the shoulder, and Mynheer Heenvliet gave a sigh and sat up, blinking his eyes.

Floris came round the table.

“Asleep?” he said.

The old man looked from one to the other, then he asked—

“Who let the fire out? I told Anna to bring in the lamp at half-past five.”

“You have been asleep?” demanded Floris, with his hand on his heart.

“It seems so,” smiled the merchant. “How quietly you came in! Ugh, it is chilly!” He rose. “We will go into the other room and have supper.”

He took Elizabeth’s arm, and she smiled at Floris.

“You look rather pale,” she remarked.

“There is nothing the matter, is there?”

“Nothing; let us go in to supper.”

There are some things a man can do only once.

# THE SENTRY OF THE SEDGE-FLATS.

BY CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS,

*Author of "Kings in Exile," "The Backwoodsmen," "The House in the Water," etc.*



AL E, shimmering green, and soaked in sun, the miles of sedge-flats lay outspread from the edges of the slow, bright water to the foot of the far, dark-wooded purple hills. Wind-ing through the quiet green levels came a tranquil little stream. Where its sleepy current joined the great parent river, a narrow tongue of bare sand jutted out into the golden-glowing water. At the extreme tip of the sand-spit towered, sentry-like, a long-legged grey-blue bird, as motionless as if he had been transplanted thither from the panel of a Japanese screen.

The flat, narrow head of the great heron, with its long, javelin-like, yellow beak and two slender black crest-feathers, was drawn far back by a curious undulation of the immensely long neck, till it rested between the humped blue wing-shoulders. From the lower part of the neck hung a fine fringe of vaporous rusty-grey plumes, which lightly veiled the chestnut-coloured breast. The bird might have seemed asleep, like the drowsy expanses of green sedge, silver-blue water, and opalescent turquoise sky, but for its eyes. Those eyes, round, unwinking, of a hard, glassy gold, with intense black pupils, were unmistakably and savagely wide awake.

Over the tops of the sedges, fluttering and zig-zagging waywardly, came a big butterfly, its gorgeous red-brown wings pencilled with strange hieroglyphs in black and purple. It danced out a little way over the water; and then, as if suddenly terrified by the shining peril beneath, came wavering back toward shore. A stone's throw up the channel of the little stream lay a patch of vivid green, the leaves of the arrow-weed, with its delicate, pallid blooms dreaming in the still air above them. The butterfly saw these blossoms, or perhaps smelt them, and fluttered in their direction to see if those pure chalices held honey. But on his way he noted the

moveless figure of the heron, conspicuous above the ranks of the sedge. Perhaps he took the curious shape for a post or a stump. In any case, it seemed to offer an alluring place of rest, where he might pause for a moment and flaunt his glowing wings in the sun before dancing onward to the honey-blossoms. He flickered nearer. To him those unwinking jewels of eyes had no menace. He hovered an instant about two feet above them. In that instant, like a flash of light, the long, pale neck and straight yellow beak shot out, and the butterfly was impaled. Twisting his head shoreward, without shifting his feet, the heron struck the glowing velvet wings of the insect sharply on the sand. Then, having swallowed the morsel leisurely, he drew his head down again between his shoulders, and resumed his moveless waiting.

The next matter of interest to come within the vision of those inscrutable eyes was a dragon-fly chase. Hurling low over the sedge-tops, and flashing in the sunlight like a lace-pin of rubies, came a small rose-coloured dragon-fly, fleeing for its life before a monster of its species which blazed in emerald and amethyst. The chase could have but one ending, for the giant had the speed as well as the voracious hunger. The glistening films of his wings rustled crisply as he overtook the shining fugitive and caught its slender body in his jaws. The silver wings of the victim vibrated wildly. The chase came to a hovering pause just before that immobile shape on the point of the sand-spit. Again the long yellow beak darted forth. And the radiant flies, captive and captor together, disappeared.

But such flimsy fare as even the biggest of butterflies and dragon-flies was not contenting to the sharp appetite of the heron. He took one stiff-legged stride forward, and stood in about six inches of water. Here he settled himself in a somewhat altered position, his back more awkwardly hunched, his head held lower, and his dagger of a bill pointing downward. His wicked golden eyes were not indifferent to the possibilities of the air above him, but they were now concerning

themselves more particularly with the water which flowed about his feet.

If anyone stands at the brink of a quiet summer stream, and keeps still enough, and watches intently enough, however deserted the landscape may appear, he will see life in many furtive forms go by. The great blue heron kept still enough. The water at this point went softly over a shoal half sand, half mud, and in the faint movement of the clear amber-brown current the sunlight wove a shimmering network on the bottom. Across this darted a shadow. The heron's beak shot downward with an almost inaudible splash, transfixing the shadow, and emerged with a glittering green and silver perch, perhaps five inches in length. The quivering body of the fish had its knife-edged gills wide open, and every spine of its formidable, armed fins threateningly erect. But the triumphant fisherman strode ashore with it and proceeded to hammer it into unconsciousness on the hard sand. Then, tossing it into the air, he caught it again, adroitly, by the head, and swallowed it head first, thus effectually disarming every weapon of fin and gill-cover. The progress of this substantial mouthful could be traced clearly down the bird's slim length of gullet, accompanied as it was by several seconds of contortions so violent that they made the round yellow eyes wink gravely. As soon as the morsel was fairly down, the bird stretched its neck to its full length, with a curious hitch of the base as if to assure himself the process was completed. Then he resumed his post of watching. He had no more than taken his place than a huge black tadpole wriggled by over the gold-meshed bottom. It was speared, tossed up, and swallowed in an eye-wink. Soft, slippery, and spineless, it made but a moment's incident.

A little after, on the smooth surface of the smaller stream, some fifty feet up-channel, a tiny ripple appeared. Swiftly it drew near. It was pointed, and with a long fine curve of oily ripple trailing back from it on either side, like the outline of a comet's tail. As it approached, in the apex of the parabola could be seen a minute black nose, with two bright, dark little eyes just behind it. It was a small water-rat, voyaging adventurously out from its narrow inland haunts among the lilies.

The great heron eyed its approach. To the swimmer, no doubt, the blue-grey, immobile shape at the extremity of the sand-spit looked like some weather-beaten post, placed there by man for his inexplicable

convenience in regard to hitching boats. But presently something strange in the shape of the post seemed to strike the little voyager's attention. He stopped. Perhaps he saw the menacing glitter of that yellow, unwinking stare. After a moment of wavering irresolution, he changed his course, swam straight across channel, scrambled out upon the wet mud of the further shore, and vanished among the pale root-stalks of the sedge. The heron was savage with disappointment; but no slightest movement betrayed his anger, save that the pinkish film of the lower lid blinked up once, as it were with a snap, over each implacable eye. His time would come—a faith which supports all those who know how to wait. He peered up stream for the coming of another and less wary water-rat.

Instead of the expected ripple, however, he now caught sight of a shadow which flickered across the surface of the water and in an instant had vanished over the pale sea of the grass-tops. He looked up. In the blue above hung poised, his journeying flight just at that moment arrested, a wide-winged duck-hawk, boldest marauder of the air. The heron threw his head far back, till his beak pointed straight skyward. At the same time he half lifted his strong wings, poising himself to deliver a thrust with all the strength that was in him. On the instant the hawk dropped, like a wedge of steel out of the sky, his rigid, half-closed pinions hissing with the speed of his descent. The heron never flinched. But within ten feet of him the hawk, having no mind to impale himself on that waiting spear-point, opened his wings, swerved upward, and went past with a harsh hum of wing-feathers. Wheeling again, almost instantly, he swooped back to the attack, buffeting the air just above the heron's head, but taking care not to come within range of the deadly beak. The heron refused to be drawn from his position of effective defence, and made no movement except to keep the point of his lance ever toward the foe. And presently the hawk, seeing the futility of his assaults, winged off sullenly to hunt for some unwary duck or gosling.

As he went, the heron stretched himself to his full gaunt height and stared after him in triumph. Then, turning his head slowly, he scanned the whole expanse of windless grass and sunlit water. One sight fixed his attention. Far up the windings of the lesser stream he marked a man in a boat. The man was not rowing, but sitting in the



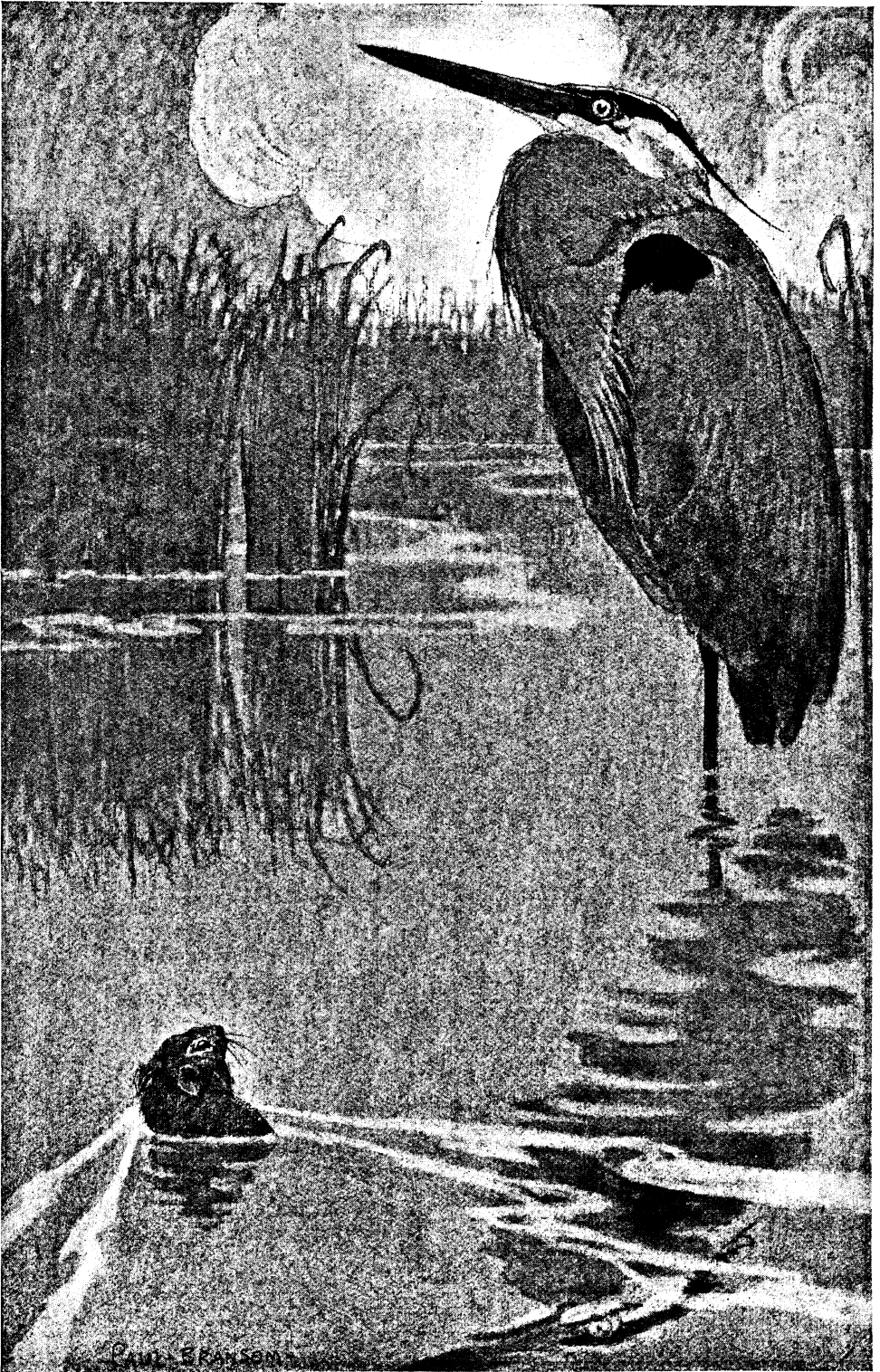
stern and propelling the boat noiselessly with an Indian paddle. From time to time he halted and examined the shore minutely. Once in a while, after such an examination, he would get out, kneel down, and be occupied for several minutes among the weeds of the shallows along the stream's edge. He was looking at the musquash holes in the bank, and setting traps before those which showed signs of present occupancy. The heron watched the process, unstirring as a dead stump, till he thought the man was coming too near. Then, spreading a vast, dark pair of wings, he arose indignantly and flapped heavily away.

Not far above the mouth of the stream the man set the last of his musquash traps. Then he paddled back leisurely by the way he had come, his dingy yellow straw hat appearing to sail close over the grass as the boat followed the windings of the stream. When the yellow hat had at length been swallowed up in the violet haze along the base of the uplands, the heron reappeared, winging low along the river shore.

The most searching scrutiny revealed nothing in all the tranquil summer landscape to disturb him. Nevertheless, he seemed to have lost conceit of his sentry post on the tip of the sand-spit. Instead of settling down to watch for what might come to him, he decided to go and look for what he wanted. With long, ungainly, precise, but absolutely noiseless strides, he took his slow way up along the shore of the little river, walking on the narrow margin of mud between the grass-roots and the water. As he went, his long neck undulated sinuously at each stride, his head was held low, and his eyes glared under every drooping leaf. The river margin, both in the water and out of it, was populous with insect life, and the darting bill took toll of it at every step. He even had the triumph of spearing a small water-rat, which had darted out of the grass-roots just as he came by. The little beast was tenacious of life, and had to be well hammered on the mud before it would consent to lie still enough to be swallowed comfortably. This pleasant task, however, was presently accomplished; and the great bird, as he stretched his head upward to give his neck that final hitch which drove the big mouthful home, took a careless step backward into the shallow water. There was a small, sinister sound, and something closed relentlessly on his leg. He had stepped into a steel trap.

Stung by the sharp pain, astounded by the strangeness of the attack, and panic-stricken, as all wild creatures are by the sudden forfeit of their freedom, the great bird lost all his dignified self-possession. First he nearly broke his beak with mad jabs at the inexplicable horror that had clutched him. Then, with a hoarse squawk of terror, he went quite wild. His huge wings flapped frantically, beating down the sedges and the blossoms of the arrow-weed, as he struggled to wrench himself free. He did succeed in lifting the trap above water; but it was securely anchored, and after a minute or two of insane, convulsive effort, it dragged him down again. Again and again he lifted it; again and yet again it dragged him down inexorably. And so the blind battle went on, with splashing of water and heavy buffeting of wings, till at last the bird fell back utterly beaten. In the last bout the trap had turned and got itself wedged in a slanting position, so that it was impossible for the captive to hold himself upright. He lay sprawling on his thighs, one wing outspread over the mud and leaves, the other over the water. His deadly beak was half open, from exhaustion. Only his indomitable eyes, still round, gold-and-black, glittering like gems, showed no sign of his weakness or his fear.

For a long time he lay there motionless, half numbed by the sense of defeat and by that gnawing anguish in his leg. Unheeded, the gleaming dragon-flies hurtled and darted, flashed and poised quivering just above his head. Unheeded, the yellow butterflies and the pale blue butterflies alighted near him on the blooms of the arrow-weed. A big green bull-frog swam up and clambered out upon the mud close before him—to catch sight at once of that bright, terrible eye and fall back into the water almost paralysed with fright; but still he made no movement. His world had fallen about him, and there was nothing for him to do but wait and see what shape his doom would take. Meanwhile, down along the margin mud, still hidden from view by a bend of the stream, another stealthy hunter was approaching. The big brown mink, who lived far up-stream in a musk-rat hole whose occupants he had cornered and devoured, was out on one of his foraging expeditions. Nothing in the shape of flesh, fish, or insect came amiss to him; but having ever the blood-lust in his ferocious veins, so that he loved to slaughter even when his appetite was well sated, he preferred, of course, big



"Perhaps he saw the menacing glitter of that yellow, unwinking stare."

game—something that could struggle, and suffer, and give him the sense of killing. A nesting duck or plover, for example, or a family of musquash—that was something worth while. On this day he had caught nothing but insects and a few chill frogs. He was savage for red blood.

Very short in the legs, but extraordinarily long in the body, lithe, snake-like in his swift darting movements, every inch of him a bundle of tough elastic muscles, with a sharp, triangular head and incredibly malevolent eyes, the mink was a figure to be dreaded by creatures many times his size. As he came round the bend of the stream, and saw the great blue bird lying at the water's edge with wings outstretched, the picture of helplessness, his eyes glowed suddenly like live coals blown upon. He ran forward without an instant's hesitation, and made as if to spring straight at the captive's throat.

This move, however, was but a feint ; for the big mink, though his knowledge of herons was by no means complete, knew, nevertheless, that the heron's beak was a weapon to beware of. He swerved suddenly, sprang lightly to one side, and tried to close in from the rear. But he didn't know the flexibility of the heron's neck. The lightning rapidity of his attack almost carried it through, but not quite. He was met by a darting stroke of the great yellow beak, which hurled him backward and ploughed a deep red furrow across his shoulder. Before he could recover himself, the bird's neck was coiled again like a set spring, the javelin beak poised for another blow.

Most of the wild creatures would have been discouraged by such a reception, and slunk away to look for easier hunting. But not so the mink. His fighting blood now well up, for him it was a battle to the death. But, for all his rage, he did not lose his cunning. Making as if to run away, he doubled upon himself with incredible swiftness and flew at his adversary's neck. Quick as he was, however, he could not be so quick as that miracle of speed, which the eye can scarcely follow—the heron's thrust. The blow caught him this time on the flank, but slantingly, leaving a terrible gash, and at the same time a lucky buffet from the elbow of one great wing dashed him into the water. With this success the heron strove to rise to his feet—a position from which he could have fought to greater advantage. But the lay of the trap pulled him down again irresistibly. As he sank back, the mink clambered out upon

the shore and crouched in front of him, just a little beyond the reach of his stroke.

The mink was now a picture of battle fury, every muscle quivering, blood pulsing from his gashes, his white teeth showing in a soundless snarl, his eyes seeming to throb with crimson fire. The heron, on the other hand, seemed absolutely composed. His head, immobile, alert, in perfect readiness, was drawn back between his shoulders. His eyes were as wide, and fixed, and clear, and glassily staring, as the jewelled eyes of an idol.

For some seconds the mink crouched, as if trying to stare his adversary out of countenance. Then he launched himself straight at the bird's back. The movement had all the impetuosity of a genuine attack, but with marvellous control it was checked on the instant. It had been enough, however, to draw the heron's counter-stroke, which fell just short of its object. With the bird's recovery, the mink shot in to close quarters. He received a second blow, which laid open the side of his face, but it was a short stroke, with not enough force behind it to repulse him. Ignoring it, he closed, fixed his teeth in the bird's neck, and flung his lithe length over the back, where it would be out of reach of the buffeting wings.

The battle was over, for the mink's teeth were long and strong. They cut deep, straight into the life ; and, undisturbed by the windy flopping of the great, helpless wings, the victor lay drinking the life-blood which he craved. A black whirling shadow sailed over the scene, but it passed a little behind the mink's tail and was not noticed. It paused, seeming to hover over a patch of lily leaves. A moment more, and it vanished. There was a hiss, and the great duck-hawk, the same one the heron had driven off earlier in the day, dropped out of the zenith. The mink had just time to raise his snarling and dripping muzzle in angry surprise, when the hawk's talons closed upon him. One set fastened upon his throat, cutting straight through windpipe and jugular ; the other set gripped and pierced his tender loins. The next moment he was jerked from the body of his prey, and carried—head, legs, and tail limply hanging—away far over the green wastes of the sedge to the great hawk's eyrie, in the heart of the cedar-swamp beyond the purple uplands.

Some ten minutes later, a splendid butterfly, all glowing orange and maroon, came and settled on the back of the dead heron, and waved its radiant wings in the tranquil light.

# GOLF COMPETITIONS.

BY SIR HENRY SETON-KARR, C.M.G.

THERE is no game in the world that lends itself better to competition, to organised scientific, prize-winning competition, than the game of golf, and probably a larger number of men, and one might even add women and children—for there are even children's competitions here and there—take part in such competitions than in any other modern form of friendly competitive relaxation; (when it comes to serious high-class competition, "relaxation" hardly seems the right word; but for the moment let the expression go at that).

The fact remains, then, that golf competitions are always with us. The daily papers are full of their records and results. Every club has its monthly medal, its biennial or even more frequent meetings, with rows of cups, etc., to be played for by members in various competitions; almost every association, occupation, and profession has its yearly tournament and its matches. The Houses of Parliament, the Bar, the Stock Exchange, solicitors, accountants, etc., etc., all indulge in golf competitions, as well as in occasional friendly matches with one another or with various golf clubs. Then on

a higher plane, and in a more serious spirit, there are the open scratch competitions for valuable cups and presentation vases, generally held on some well-known and accessible course, in which the select class of "scratch" or "plus" players compete, the giants of golf, the masters of steady and accurate play, meet and wrestle, always before a gallery, with one another. Last, above and beyond all ordinary golf competitions, there remain to be mentioned the amateur and the open

championships, the two blue ribbons of the game, the competitions for which generally attract the best players, not only of the United Kingdom, but of the world.

To anyone, then, who has followed the course of this remarkable game, and its increasing and widely spread popularity during the past quarter of a century, it is obvious that golf competitions are an essential feature of golf, even an apparent necessity of

its continuance and existence. There is one club I know of that boasts of the fact that it has no monthly medals or annual meetings. In this respect it professes to be unique. It is merely a social club possessing a good golf-course for the convenience and relaxation of its members. But I notice (I happen to be a member) that the claimed virtue in this respect even of this club is not without its flaw, inasmuch as it has started one solitary yearly competitive meeting for its members during recent years. This is obviously a concession to the competitive spirit of the day. But no argument as to the popularity or otherwise of golf competitions, and as to whether they are virtuous or pernicious, can be founded on the experience of this particular club,

which really owes its strength of membership to its easy access from fashionable London. A golf-course on which, after breakfasting at a reasonably early hour, a busy Parliamentarian can have a morning's round before attendance in the House of Commons in the afternoon, or where a busy City man can, after a hard day's work, snatch a round between tea and a late dinner, will always be sure of its popularity and membership.

Passing from the particular to the general,



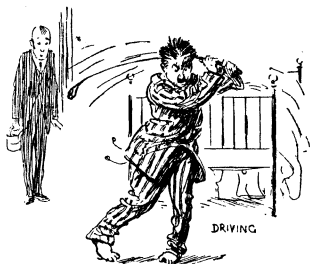
"Who rail against competitions."

there is a class of golfer, known to many of us, who rail against competitions of all kinds on principle. They spoil the spirit of the game forsooth; encourage pot-hunting; tend to rouse the worst passions of mankind; make the game more a business than a pleasure; and so on. The nasty critic will, of course, retort that these are the arguments of the man who never, by any chance, wins a competition, is incapable of doing so; and therefore

from mere envy condemns that in which he finds himself unable to excel. But we merely cite these arguments. They are not our own. We

are prepared to believe, on the general ground that the accumulated wisdom and practice of the multitude, gradually evolved over a course of time, is and must be right, that golf competitions serve a good purpose and encourage the spread of a health-giving game. At all events, the fact remains. Contrast, for example, the golf reports in the daily press of twenty years ago with those of to-day. The result is surprising. The spread of golf as a social game alongside of and in proportion to the increase of golf competitions as a more or less serious business is undeniable and, I am prepared to believe, is generally beneficial.

I well remember being instrumental in starting the Parliamentary Golf Handicap in 1887. It being doubtful whether we could get a respectable entry from members of the Commons alone, it was decided to include the Peers, the Press-Gallery, and Clerks of both Houses, a course which has largely contributed, I believe, to the interest and popularity of the competition. The development of this particular competition has been remarkable during the past twenty years. The entry itself has trebled. Its popularity is great, and it is generally looked forward to as providing, particularly in its initial stage, when the first two rounds are played on some well-known seaside course, a most enjoyable Parliamentary picnic.



"Assiduous practice."

One of its practical benefits has been to encourage hard-worked legislators to play golf. The stimulus of this competition started those to play who, in some cases, had never played before. Weeks of the recess were sometimes devoted to assiduous practice in anticipation of the Parliamentary Handicap. Who shall say what amount of health and strength and additional powers of work were not gained in this simple process?

We are alluding, of course, in this, as in many other like cases, to handicap competitions, in which the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong.

The science of the handicap is peculiarly adaptable to golf, and can therein be calculated to a nicety, though I do not propose to take up space now by elaborating this proposition. The result is at once to widen the area of competition and largely to increase the number of possible winners. Theoretically, every starter in a handicap competition is a

possible winner, which reminds me, by the by, of the story of a promising beginner well in the handicap of a certain competition on a celebrated south coast course. It was medal play; that is, by score and not

byholes. He duly arrived at the eighteenth hole after an excellent round in which he had excelled himself. Rumour got out that his net score would break the record, and some friends strolled out to see him

play the last hole, which he had only to do in a common or garden five or even six, in order handsomely to win the competition and cover himself with glory. Shortly after, a dishevelled and broken-hearted golfer crawled up to the club-house and disappeared into the dressing-rooms, mentally registering a vow never to play this hateful game again. A yawning bunker at the very last hole had badly trapped his drive; after one or two failures to get out,

he had lost his head and his temper; and a score well into double figures at the last hole ruined his card, snatched victory from his grasp, and gave him his first serious experience of the discipline of golf.

Scratch competitions are on a totally different footing. No allowance is made for age, weakness, or inexperience. Here, theoretically, the race is to the swift. It is a serious business, and the man who wins the "amateur" or the "open" must be sure of himself, sound in nerve, wind, and limb, and a master golfer. There is this difference, one may note in passing, between the two—the one is hole play, the other by score. While the latter, as some maintain, is the best test of skilled and accurate golf, the former is more interesting both to play and to watch, and perhaps a greater test of nerve and will. A finer finish, by the by, has seldom been



"He had lost his head and his temper."



"Dropped each ball so driven into the hole."

consecutive days commands our admiration as a perfect human golf machine.

Probably there is no kind of game competition which exacts so much from human skill, nerve, and endurance as the open golf championship. It has to be done alone, each man for himself playing his own ball. Then in the four rounds, played by the duly qualified competitors, a single really bad hole, out of the seventy-two, spells almost certain failure for the player. And what a little makes all the difference! At the last

witnessed than the final of the amateur championship last year, between R. Maxwell and Captain Hutchison. The golf was first-class, as the scores testified, which is not always the case in an "amateur" final after three days' strenuous match play. Then the finish itself was of dramatic interest. Captain Hutchison was one up and two to play, if I remember right, when Maxwell by a *tour de force* won the seventeenth in three, and then the eighteenth and the match. This was fine golf, and for real human interest in a friendly contest is bad to beat. Strictly viewed as a competition, however, the contest for the open championship stands supreme. The man who can play six consecutive first-class rounds of golf in four



"Colonel Niblick proclaimed a like result."



hole of one round, Braid went boldly, in a twenty-foot putt, for the back of the hole, just missed it by a hair's breadth, overran, missed the return putt, and so lost two strokes and the open championship for 1909. No man can absolutely command a twenty-foot putt. A worm cast or a blade of grass may just deflect the ball a hair's breadth and so cause the loss of a stroke or two.

Taylor's recovery, on the other hand, after taking forty-one to go out in the first round, was a masterpiece of fine golf, only possible with an experienced first-class player. By means of two threes at a couple of "bogey" four holes, coupled with perfect golf at the remaining seven holes of the return journey, did he succeed in recovering lost ground and finally land himself a winner.

But these are the serious, strenuous incidents of high-class competitions, good to read of and to watch, but not possible of emulation or achievement by the ordinary human golfer. Let him be content, then, the ordinary average handicap player, with the incitement of handicap competitions. Sitting in his arm-chair at home, he can often play a perfect round. It all seems so easy. It is only when he proceeds to put his theories into practice that actual achievement falls so far short of his own fancied ideal, to which he is always meaning to attain, but seldom, if ever, succeeds in so doing. Handicap competitions have their uses. They are an infallible and certain test of play, to begin with, reducing arm-chair excellence to the grim criterion of actual, marked-by-the-card, every-hole-played-out-to-the-bitter-end results.

Occasionally we can all do a hole in two, or even one, but never in a serious competition

—which reminds me of an amusing story I read the other day of a competition on a certain course where there was a particular hole whose green could be reached by any ordinary driver in one. It was a blind hole, bounded by high gorse, but otherwise possessing no peculiar or uncommon features. A certain mischievous lassie, having concealed herself in the gorse close to the green, proceeded, during the course of the competition, to mark every drive that reached the green, and then, darting out of her concealment and back before the players came in sight, dropped each ball so driven into the hole, but not more than one of each couple, if, perchance, both players had reached the green. In every case the owner of the ball, only too ready to believe in his own skill or luck, claimed the hole in one stroke, naturally believing he had done it. When the returns came dropping in, the trouble began. Major Bunker, the first happy arrival, announced in stentorian tones that he had done such a hole in one. Colonel Niblick soon after, in similar manner, proclaimed a like result. The feelings of the club generally may be better imagined than described when at least half-a-dozen players, one after another, unwilling to hide successful achievement, triumphantly or modestly, as the case might be, returned their respective cards, duly attested, showing in each case this particular hole done in one stroke. The memory of that particular golf competition still survives; but the remarkable coincidence of at least six players doing the same hole in one stroke in the same day has not yet, I believe, been explained to the satisfaction of that particular club committee. Truly a certain long-haired lassie had much to answer for.

## A DAYTIME MOON.

**F**RAMED in the pallid panes of city windows

I saw the daytime moon in London skies—

Too pale for beauty, cold for close caresses—

So shines the unloved in unloving eyes.

Like you, pale moon, she shines for one who finds her

Too pale for passion, for desire too cold;

What dead queen ever won her knight to worship

Save by her magic trail of cloth of gold?

Keep grief far from him! Yet, should grief, befalling,

Find him with all stars quenched, and no friend nigh,

Break, light, thro' scurrying storm-clouds, to remind him

A daytime moon still watches in the sky.

ETHEL M. HEWITT.

# BIANCA'S DAUGHTER.

By JUSTUS MILES FORMAN,

Author of "The Garden of Lies," "Tommy Carteret," "The Quest," etc.

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.—The two Blakes, father and son, shared most of each other's tastes and moods—for the two men had been a great deal together for some ten years after the son had left the University, and had travelled much together in remote parts of the world—and out of their very sympathy the younger man, Richard Blake, became aware that his father seemed strangely oppressed with either physical pain or mental anxiety in the midst of Mrs. Cartwright's ballroom, and this impression seemed due to the sudden pointing out of a *débutante*, a Miss Vittoria Fleming, whose rare beauty was the talk of the room. But the older man declared himself only bored, after all, and Richard speedily forgot the circumstance in the new interest of dance and conversation with the beautiful Miss Fleming, who had hitherto lived all her life at the country seat of her father. On her mother's side she was descended from a distinguished Italian family, but since that mother's death her father, Pender Fleming, had lived the life of a complete recluse, and Bianca's daughter was now entering the larger world beyond her Hampshire home for the first time. She and Richard Blake at this first meeting became conscious of some influence binding their lives together for good or ill, but on his return home from the dance, Blake found his father anxious to persuade him to embark on a long foreign cruise. He talked to his father of the dance and of the arresting beauty and rare personality of Miss Fleming, only to draw from the older man an agitated entreaty that he would not allow himself to fall in love with the girl. Simultaneously Vittoria was asking her hostess many questions about the mother whom she had never known, and, incidentally, some about her new friend. Yet neither the man nor the girl learned anything that could have explained either the distress of the elder Blake or Mrs. Dudley's reluctance to answer Vittoria's questions at all frankly. Then Blake and Vittoria met again at a dinner-party, without becoming any better acquainted; but later on he happened to be in the Park when the girl's horse bolted, and succeeded in stopping the frightened animal while Vittoria cleared her foot from the stirrup by which she was being dragged, and their friendship seemed to be developed by this open moment of danger and rescue. Even then, however, circumstances prevented Blake from seeing the girl again before she left town, and he considered her departure as the decree of Fate that he was not to succumb to the attraction against which he had fought with all the strength of a man who wanted to remain free at all costs. Thus much he confessed to Mrs. Faring, only to learn that she and her husband had taken a house in the country, but a short drive from the Flemings' home. Meanwhile, Vittoria had been welcomed home by her father and his neighbour, Beau Temple, "the novelist of the chosen few," and her own lifelong friend, who had only been awaiting her return from her first season in the great world to ask her if she could come to look upon him as a husband. To her father, when he urged her to accept the proposal, the girl said: "I'm very fond of him. The only question is, am I fond enough, and in the right way? I dare say I am." But all the time she wondered why Richard Blake had disappeared out of her life again without word or sign. Vittoria passed the week following her return to Standish very restfully and pleasantly. She thought that the thing which lay deep down at the bottom of her mind might die if she left it there, and learned to forget it. There was no reason to suppose that she would see Richard Blake for a very long time, and it was quite possible that the long time might become never. In any case, she argued, she could not possibly see him until another season, and by that time she would be safely married to Beaumont Temple. She looked ahead to her probable marriage with a calm and contented mind. Its only alternative appeared to be an indefinite continuation of her lonely life at Standish, and the months in London had taught her how intolerable that would be. Moreover, she was exceedingly fond of Beau Temple, and she could imagine going through life with him very happily indeed. But one day she rode over to call on the Farings, and found Blake there, on a visit, and realised the ascendancy he had established over her, yet without acknowledging it. So she returned and told Beau Temple definitely that she would marry him. Then, in the leisure of her country life, she obtained access to an unused room in which she found a portrait of the Italian mother whom she had never known, and was amazed to find how closely the picture resembled herself. Yet her father had never alluded to it. But the drama of her life was to be carried an act further by a visit from Blake, who explained his own silence and asked her to marry him. And she could but tell him that she had just accepted Beau Temple.

## CHAPTER XIV.

A MYSTERY EXPLAINED—VITTORIA  
MAKES A PROMISE.

"IT is my father," Vittoria said. "You've never met him, have you? No, of course! How very odd of him to be walking about in the garden! He seldom comes out of doors at all."

Pender Fleming came down the gravel path, walking heavily, after his wont, for his gait was as uncouth as his shapeless body: there was no elasticity in him. His vast and pallid cheeks—they looked ghastly under the

wholesome sunlight—shook a little as he walked, and the brim of his Panama hat shook too. He came through the iron gate and paused there a moment to peer before him with narrowed eyes, for he was short-sighted. His attitude, with out-thrust pendulous head, was oddly suggestive of those sullen beasts of prey who sit within cages at a show and stare dully at the passers-by.

Vittoria spoke to him, and he said—

"Ah, there you are! There you are! Is that you, Bean?" He began again to move forward with his short, heavy paces. The tabby cat, with friendly intent, leapt

down from its place atop the sundial and got in the way of his feet. Pender kicked at it without looking down. He asked again—

"Is that you, Beau?" And Vittoria laughed, saying—

"Of course it's not Beau. It is——" She halted midway of her sentence for sheer amazement and alarm, for her father, advancing past the fountain pool, seemed at last to see clearly the face of the young man before him, and gave a sort of gasping, whispering cry. He had a stick in one hand, but he raised both hands before him, as if he were frightened, and all his huge white face began to twitch and quiver in the most horrible way, as if he were in a fit of epilepsy.

Vittoria thought she heard him say—

"After all these years!" But she was not sure of the words. She looked from her father to Richard Blake, and that young man seemed to be as astonished and as alarmed as she was. The thing was incomprehensible. She was a little frightened, but she moved closer to her father and touched his arm, saying anxiously—

"Are you ill? Are you in pain, father?" And when he did not answer her, she said—

"This is Mr. Richard Blake, who is staying with the Farings. You must help me thank him. He saved my life once, in London. I never told you."

Pender Fleming raised the stick in a shaking hand.

"Get out of my garden, sir!" he said in a hoarse whisper. He could hardly speak. Vittoria cried sharply—

"Father! father!" And Richard Blake gave a little exclamation of astonishment, and stared at the man who stood trembling before him, the stick waving in erratic circles overhead. He said—

"Yes, of course! Certainly I'll get out of your garden, if you say so, but I must know why. I was quite properly presented to your daughter by her cousin, Mrs. Dudley, and at present I am a guest of your daughter's friends; so, you see, I must be fairly respectable. I should like to know your reason for ordering me away. Men don't take that tone with one another without some excellent reason."

"Will you get out of my garden," said Pender Fleming, "or will you be beaten half to death and then kicked out?" He advanced a step, holding the heavy stick on high, but his arm shook uncontrollably, and the stick wavered from side to side in his hold. Blake made no movement to defend himself. He kept his hands down and his

eyes upon the elder man's eyes. But when Fleming spoke the second time and came a step forward, Vittoria sprang before him and caught his upraised arm. She cried out again—

"Father! father!" And the man's arm dropped suddenly beside him, as if he had been shot or struck a violent blow. Holding him with her two hands, Vittoria stared into his face.

"You must be mad!" she said amazedly. "You must be quite mad! Who do you think this is? You're making some terrible and grotesque mistake. This is Mr. Richard Blake—Richard Blake. I tell you he saved my life. You owe him my very life. Are you insane?"

"I know what I am doing," said Pender Fleming in a thick voice. "I know who this—man is. He is Richard Blake, the son of Creighton Blake, and if he remains here before me very much longer, I shall kill him with my hands!" He gave a sort of sob.

"Go into the house!" he said, in his hoarse, whispering tone. "Go into the house at once! I must deal with this—this scoundrel alone." But at that the girl drew back away from him with an odd light in her eyes that Pender Fleming did not know. She stood beside the younger man and laid her two hands upon him.

"Whatever you have to say," said she, "you will say to us both. I think you are a little beside yourself, and I know that you have hideously insulted my guest and your guest—insulted him beyond all pardon—but now that we three are together, you must give your reasons for—for the attitude you have taken. It concerns me as much as it concerns Richard Blake, and—I remain here."

"For the last time," said Pender Fleming to the man before him, and trembling very violently, "for the last time, will you leave my garden?" And Blake said again—

"Not until I know why. For, on my word of honour," said he, "I am absolutely and entirely in the dark."

"You lie!" cried Pender Fleming, in a chattering rage. "You lie most utterly!"

For just an instant the younger man's head went forward and a deep flush swept over it, but he checked himself with a great effort.

"I said on my word of honour," he repeated. But Pender Fleming laughed discordantly.

"Honour!" he sneered, laughing. "A

Blake's honour!" And then, as if he had come at last quite to the end of endurance and anything like self-control, he raised his arms to the bright blue sky, and a fit of raving and sobbing and cursing madness fell upon him, and he was as one possessed.

In the end, after, it may be, five minutes of this, the man's contorted face went crimson and white again very alarmingly, and he swayed upon his feet and would have fallen prone but that Vittoria and Richard Blake caught him in their arms and eased the heavy body down upon one of the garden benches which stood near.

Over Fleming's bowed head they faced each other, white and still, for those half-coherent ravings had told a very terrible story, and they knew that the story was so.

Vittoria's beautiful mother, the sweet and gentle mother who had, after so many years, become a living reality to her, had left her husband's house, and the six-months'-old child there, and had gone away. It was to Creighton Blake that she went, and she died in his arms a year later.

Instinctively the mind of each of these two young people flashed back to those first meaningless and unheeded warnings.

"Catharine Dudley knew!" the girl said, in a soundless whisper. "That is why she tried to discourage me in the beginning. But, oh, why didn't she tell me the truth? Why? Why?"

And Blake, staring dumbly at the girl before him, said within himself—

"That was what my father meant! Good Heavens, why couldn't he have told me?"

It never occurred to either of them to doubt the truth of what Pender Fleming had betrayed in his fury. The thing carried conviction with it. It was too terribly serious to be false. So they stood for a long time looking into each other's white faces over the huddled and half-unconscious figure that crouched like a dead thing on the garden bench. But at last, as if the same impulse had stirred them both at the same instant, they moved a little distance away, towards the iron gate in the wall. The Irish terrier, seated on its haunches near by, regarded them with eyes of puzzled anxiety, and thumped its stub of a tail upon the garden path. Clearly, the air of that place was surcharged with trouble, and the small beast gave one short whine of anguish, and began to shiver, as dogs do. Farther away, the sleek and self-indulgent cat, which had skipped so indignantly from before the toe of Pender Fleming's boot, was skipping

again, at play with the golden flecks of sunlight which the wind-stirred leaves above made to dance and shiver over the trodden earth.

Vittoria brushed her hand across her eyes as one does awaking from sleep.

"I—can't think," she said slowly, and frowning. "It is as if I were drugged or partly stunned. I seem to be unable to think at all." She broke suddenly into a fit of dry sobbing.

"My beautiful mother! My beautiful new mother! I cannot—believe! What shall I do now, without my mother?"

Blake turned away from her, for he dared not look at the frank agony which was in her eyes at that moment. What the girl had said of herself was as true of him. He was too stunned to think with any clearness. The peculiar horror of the thing had come upon them too unawares. They were bewildered before it. Yet through all the shock and horror of that hour the man's first thought was for the girl he loved. It hurt him intolerably to see her so wrung by grief. He turned back to her in a sort of desperation, crying her name—

"Vittoria!" And neither of them knew that he used that name for the first time.

"Ah, please! please!" she said, covering her face. She said: "I cannot speak to you just now. Afterwards—I don't know. Will you please go away? I think you'd better go away." And he answered her gravely—

"Yes. I understand. I'll go at once. First, though, I must look to your father."

But when he turned to where Pender Fleming sat huddled in one corner of the garden bench, breathing hard, his heavy face suffused, his eyes all but closed, she moved after him, calm again, with dry eyes.

"My father has had these seizures before," she said. "They are not dangerous, I believe. No, you can do nothing for him. Just call the gardener, please! He's outside the gate yonder. And tell him to send Jamieson. That is my father's man."

Blake did her bidding at once, and in an incredibly brief time Jamieson came, running silently—not as other mortals run, with obvious haste, but in a fashion quite his own—a small, thin-faced man with shifting eyes and the unnaturally neat manner of the body-servant. He looked once obliquely towards Richard Blake, and dropped upon his knees before the bench where his master sat. He must have gone always prepared for emergencies, for he at once drew from

his pocket a little flask of lavender salts and held it to Pender Fleming's nose. The man began to cough and gasp and to roll his great head back and forth. Then Richard Blake bowed and went away, Mr. Hennessy barking triumphantly over the retreat, and Vittoria stood still in her place and watched him go.

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*

The valet had despatched the gardener for a certain invalid wheel-chair which was kept on the south porch of the house, and it came quickly, attended by the gardener and a boy hailed from the stables, but Pender Fleming cursed them all wearily, and would have none of such aid. He got with some difficulty to his feet, once turned a lowering glance towards the girl who stood near, and so, without a word, leaning heavily upon the shoulder of his body-servant, went away up the garden path out of sight. Vittoria was left there alone, save for the little faithful dog that shivered at her feet, and whined, and besought her with a timid, supplicating paw.

She sat down once more upon the garden bench and leaned back, closing her eyes. She was full still of a vast bewilderment, and the sick and stunned sense of loss irreparable. She wondered a little, dully, at the savage cruelty of the fate, chance, providence, whatever it was, which had given her her sweet and beautiful mother, if only to rob her again so dreadfully. That seemed to her so wanton a piece of sheer malevolence.

She sat there still for what was to her a measureless interval—but it cannot have been very long—not thinking much or reflecting with any clearness, only suffering—washed and submerged in grief and resentment and a sort of bitter vicarious shame. But at last she roused herself and got to her feet.

"I must go to him," she said. "I must go to my father." The little dog frisked about her as she moved, barking joyfully and jumping up to lick her hand, but she went on heedless and entered the house. She made her way at once to Pender Fleming's study and knocked. There was no answer, and she opened the door and went in. Her father sat in his arm-chair beside the big writing-table, idle, his arms hanging beside him, his chin on his breast. The valet was not in the room.

Pender looked up, as the girl closed the door behind her, and he said ungraciously—

"I would rather be alone." But Vittoria

came where he was and stood before him. For the first time in her life she was not afraid of her father.

"You have been alone too long," said she. "You have been alone ever since I can remember. Don't drive me away now. I'm your daughter, after all. I'm all you have. It is time I began to be something more to you than a stranger—a sort of young guest in your house." She dropped down to the floor and laid her arms upon her father's knee. Over her Pender Fleming's vast face began to contort in strange grimaces, and tears began to roll down it—the terrible, hard-wrung tears of the stern man who seldom weeps. Vittoria hid her face upon her outflung arms, and presently felt her father's hand, heavy and awkward and trembling, on her head. After a little time she looked up to him and spoke.

"Why is it?" she said. "I am wondering why it is that you have kept me away from you all these years. I might have been so much to you, it seems to me. I was all you had, and you wouldn't have even me. You made me afraid of you, you know. I've always been terribly afraid of you. Why couldn't we have been like other fathers and daughters?"

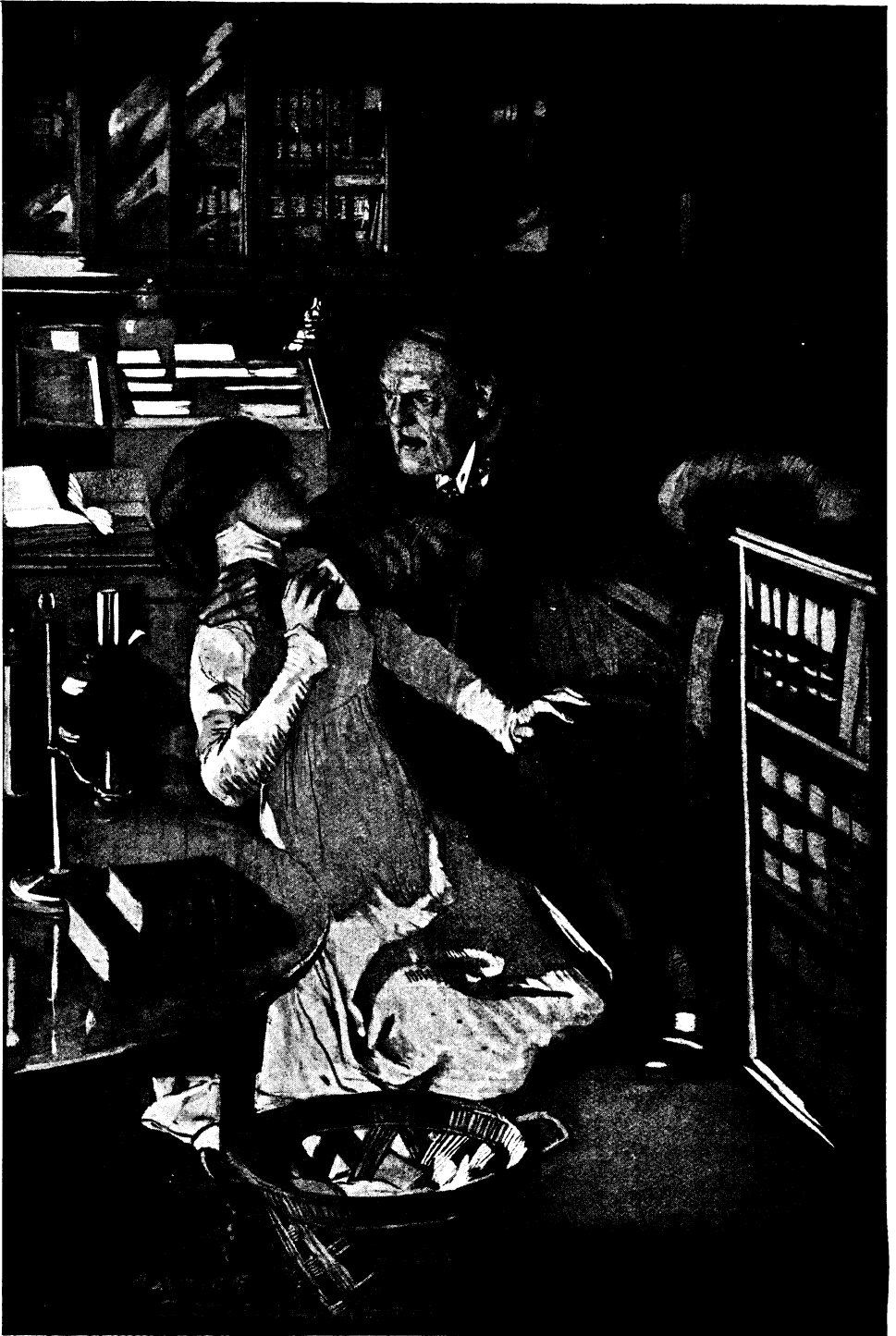
The man looked down at her and away. His lips moved, and he seemed to be trying quite grotesquely to speak—to explain—but he had forgotten how. He had been silent too long. Vittoria watched him with a tense eagerness, and saw the effort he made, and was both astonished and touched. A sudden light broke in upon her—a possible explanation—and she cried out.

"Was it," she asked, "because I am—so like her—like my mother? Was it because I brought her back to you that you couldn't bear to see me?"

That great pallid face began again to contort itself in dreadful grimaces, but the man controlled it. He nodded his head, looking away.

"Yes. It was that. . . . You don't know, child. . . . A sort of miracle. Year by year . . . more like. . . . I couldn't bear it." And she answered—

"Yes, I know. I'll tell you how I know. I found my mother's portrait yesterday. I was going to tell you about it when I had a chance. It was up in an attic room where some men were working at the pipes. Yes, I know." At first she thought that her father was on the verge of one of his fits of anger, for the blood rushed to his face and suffused it, and during a brief instant



“What is he to you?”



his eyes darkened. But he covered his face with his hands and was still.

"I wish," Vittoria said very earnestly, "that I could make up to you even a little for what—they did so long ago—what my mother did. I wish that I could comfort you, somehow, but I see how it is. You can never even look at me without thinking of her—remembering. It is terrible."

"Do you think I ever forget?" cried Pender Fleming aloud. "Do you think that one hour passes of the day or night that does not bring her face to me, the sound of her voice—the—fright and hatred in her eyes? Do you? I tell you I see her always. I sit here in this room, and she stands across yonder in the shadows and looks at me. And *he* comes there, too! He comes! And she shrinks away from me with hate in her eyes—and I hear what she says to me—intolerable things—and she—turns to him and they go away together." The man began to tremble violently. He cried—

"I have lived in hell for nearly twenty years, and that man's face has mocked me!"

Vittoria caught the hand which lay near her between her own hands and bowed her cheek upon it. She had fallen to trembling also in sympathy with the tremors which shook her father's great body so fiercely. She was very swift of comprehension, and she understood, as well as if the man had spoken at great length and with great eloquence, the ceaseless and enduring torture which had made him a sort of madman dwelling in the presence of his curse. After all, she was Pender Fleming's daughter, though she bore no littlet outward resemblance to him, and that grim and deathless obsession of love and hate was far from incomprehensible to her.

A thought came to her mind, and she looked up. She said—

"Is Richard Blake, then, so like his father? When you saw him in the garden, you seemed to be—overcome before I could tell you who he was, and you cannot ever have seen him before, I should think—not for years, anyhow." She understood Pender Fleming to say in a whisper: "Yes—very like! Very like!" And then she remembered that she herself had once had a glimpse of Creighton Blake.

"Of course! I saw the father once—at a ball in London." She paused to reflect upon that man's haggard and grief-scored face.

"Yes, they are alike, but not so much alike as my mother and I. I saw him. . . . Do you know—" She looked up again with a certain curiosity.

"Do you know, I wonder that you let me run the risk of meeting Richard Blake. You must have realised that it was possible."

"Beaumont Temple," said her father, "told me that—the two were abroad. Else I should not have allowed you to go to London." And she nodded at that.

"Yes, I believe they are abroad most of the time. The other—Richard Blake's father—is abroad now—in the Pacific Islands, I think. . . . But how very dreadful that I should have met them—met that man's son and never have known! He didn't know, either. You were wrong there. I am sure that he didn't know. His father must have kept it from him as you have kept it from me. He didn't know."

"There is a great deal that is strange in it—uncanny, now that I know. I begin to think there is something horribly fatal about it. Fate still working away . . . after all these years. . . . And I wonder why? Why?" Holding fast to his hand, she looked up oddly into Pender Fleming's bowed face.

"Do you know," she said, "I believe that is uncannily true—about Fate working still after all these years. It is very strange, but Richard Blake, quite blindly, quite ignorantly, seems to have done all that a human being could by any possibility do to make up for his father's wrong to you? He saved my life. I told you that, didn't I? I was thrown from my horse in London, and by a sort of miracle he saved me when I was being dragged. I'm quite certain that I should have been killed if he hadn't come to help me." The girl's voice rose a little in her excitement, and she gripped Pender Fleming's hand hard between hers.

"Do you see what I mean? Creighton Blake took your wife from you, and his son has given you back your daughter's life, though he didn't at all know what he was doing. There must have been Fate in that. It's quite too strange just to have happened."

"Doesn't it—help a little?" she asked, almost timidly. "Doesn't it take away—a little of the bitterness? It seems to me very wonderful."

But the man drew away his hand with a sharp effort, and she felt that the violent trembling had once more come upon him. She looked up, and his white face was drawn with it—wrung and twisted.

"I would rather you had died!" cried Pender Fleming, in a terrible voice. He shook horribly from head to feet.

"I would rather you had died than owe

your life to that man's son!" Vittoria gave an exclamation of horror and pain, and shrank a little away, but her father suddenly put out his hands, grasped her by the shoulders, and held her fast. That white, contorted face blazed down upon her with a dreadful anguish, and his trembling shook her strongly.

"What is he to you?" cried Pender Fleming. "What is this son of Creighton Blake to you, that you sit with him in your own garden? Answer me!"

"He is nothing," she said. "Nothing. Please let me go; you hurt me!" But the man swept on, unheeding—

"He is his father's son—blood and flesh! Blake they are, both of them. They have torn my heart alive out of my body—despoiled me—robbed me of more than life itself. They have damned me in this world and in all worlds to come—and you take the hand of one of them, smile upon him, laugh with him! I would rather see you dead here before me! I tell you that I would rather see you dead! It is unthinkable!" He gave a sudden bitter sob.

"It needs only that you should tell me you have fallen in love with this Blake. Then I think I could at last curse my fate and die. It needs only that. So tell me, if it is true."

Vittoria wrenched herself free from the gripping hands and got to her feet, breathing stormily.

"I have already told you," said she, white and angry. "I have said that Richard Blake is nothing to me. He could be nothing to me, however I might feel, because I have promised to marry Beau Temple. I settled that definitely yesterday. In any case, when I think that he—that Richard Blake is the son of the man who wronged you so terribly—who robbed me of my mother, I—I cannot think of it calmly. I am bound to be grateful to him always, because he saved my life, and I repeat that in doing so he did all that a human being could do to repair his father's sin, but—I hope I shall never see him again. I cannot bear to think of him." She spoke very earnestly, with all the emphasis she could give the words, and she meant what she said. The enormity of that ancient wrong loomed very high to her just then, as she looked upon the bleak and bitter wreck of a man before her and thought what it was that had crushed him. The very atmosphere of Pender Fleming's habitation was an atmosphere of deathless, brooding grief, of implacable, titanic hatred. It sur-

rounded her and she breathed it in. It was poisonous, like the vapour of a deadly drug. In that moment she hated Richard, the son of Creighton Blake, almost as bitterly as her father hated him.

"Promise me," cried Pender Fleming eagerly—his passion would seem to have filled him with strange and grotesque terrors—"promise me that you will never see this man again! I cannot bear the thought of your even seeing him. Promise me solemnly and faithfully!" Vittoria shook her head.

"That," said she, "is a thing no one could promise. I might see him by accident at almost any time. He is staying in the neighbourhood, though he may have the decency to go away now. And, besides, in later years, it is quite probable that, however hard we might both try to avoid it, we shall meet occasionally. If I marry Beau, I shall not live always in the country, you know. I shall be in London during the season. You ask an impossible thing."

But the man was in no state to be reasonable. He got with a struggle to his feet and stood trembling before his daughter. "You are trying to trick me!" he cried excitedly. "You are trying to evade a promise. What are you hiding from me? What, I say?" He gave a sort of shout.

"Am I too late? Has it come, then? Is it true that you love him—this man? Answer me!"

"I have told you twice," said she. "How many times must I say it?" She saw that her father was beside himself.

He seemed to make a violent effort at self-command, and became calm. He peered at the girl with a sort of madman's cunning.

"Promise me, then, solemnly and faithfully, that you will never marry Richard Blake!"

Vittoria gave a brief laugh of angry scorn and said—

"I promise."

But he held her still with his eyes.

"Faithfully and solemnly?"

She frowned upon him.

"I have never yet broken my word," said she, "and I do not expect to begin now. I gave you the absurd promise you asked. It will add no force to it to pile up words. Still, if it is any comfort to you—yes, I promise faithfully and solemnly. It is all quite absurd and needless, you know." Then, because she was angry and had borne about all she could bear, even from her father, she turned away without further speech and left the room. Pender Fleming followed a little

way after her, and he seemed to make a soundless effort to call her back, but the door closed in his face and left him standing alone.

## CHAPTER XV.

### WHEN LOVE CALLS, ANSWER AND GO.

AS she came out of her father's study, Vittoria heard weird sounds ringing through the house, and so was aware that it was luncheon-time. The summons to this mid-day meal at Standish was perforce varied and elaborate. There was never any difficulty in finding the master of the house, but Vittoria might be almost anywhere, and running her to earth (or rather to food) often required the efforts of the whole staff of servants. Mr. Griggs, the elderly butler, attended, by established custom, to the indoor branch of the search. There hung near the door of the dining-room one of those dreadful strings of so-called Japanese temple gongs, arranged more or less in a chime, with which most households have been at some period cursed, and each day at one o'clock Mr. Griggs, who had no music in his soul, performed patiently and unimaginatively upon this horror with a little muffled stick. It sounded like someone learning to play the xylophone.

Vittoria heard these unlovely sounds and called out hastily that she was coming. Mr. Griggs left off his musical labours to knock at Pender Fleming's door, but returned presently, saying that the master would not appear. So Vittoria sat alone at the table for half an hour, trying to force herself to eat something, and finding that it was well-nigh impossible in her overwrought state of mind and body. Few people can eat under such conditions as these. Still, the very peace and quiet of the familiar room, the cool silence about her, the commonplace ministrations, were very restful and relaxing, and before she had risen from the table she found that she was calm once more and free from the excitement which her father's bitter frenzy had communicated to her. She looked back over the strange interview, and was amazed and a little frightened when she realised to what a nervous pitch she had been wrought up. It was the first time within her memory that she had given way to unrestrained bitterness of thought and speech, and she was ashamed of it, though she knew well enough that it had been only the reflex of her father's incredible fury. She had made a solemn promise, too, which

was to cover the whole period of her future life; and while it seemed to her a perfectly foolish and absurdly unnecessary promise, still, a solemn promise is a sobering thing when one expects to keep it, and Vittoria reflected upon it gravely. The thought brought Richard Blake back to her, and she found that now, away from her father's blazing eyes, the thought was by no means as intolerable as it had been. After all, what she had said to Pender Fleming was quite true. The young man had done, though ignorantly, all that was possible to make up for his father's sin. There was no blame which could attach to him in that sorry matter of twenty years past.

Vittoria went slowly upstairs, meaning to change into a riding-skirt. At the door of her chamber she halted with a sudden pang, for she remembered that there was one within whom she must face in the light of new and terrible knowledge. She stood there before the door for a long time, with bent head and her hands hanging at her sides. But in the end she went in and closed the door behind her. She went straight across the room to the mantel over the fireplace, where early that morning she had had the portrait set in place, though it was not yet fastened to the wall, and she looked up very gravely, without shrinking, to meet her mother's eyes.

Again, as on the evening before, the strange semblance of a silent speech seemed to pass between the two, but it must have been plainer speech this time, for much that was in the eager and wistful gaze of Donna Bianca Fleming was now comprehensible to her daughter. The girl must have known now, in part—though not all—what it was her mother strove so hard to say to her.

She looked into that beautiful face, striving, for her father's sake, to find there some trace of cruelty, treachery, deceit—some trace of the woman who would wreck the life of the man who loved her, out of selfishness, caprice, hurt pride. She could find nothing of all that in Donna Bianca's face, nothing—only sweetness and pain and long suffering and a passionate longing for love and life. She bent her head and recalled the face of Creighton Blake, seen for one long moment across a ballroom floor, and, for her father's sake, tried to find therein some trace of the jeering libertine, the despoiler of homes. It was a haggard face, she remembered well, one to fix itself indelibly upon the memory—a face worn by incredible grief, a haunted face, but there was nothing contemptible or

vicious or cruel in it, only sorrow and a certain melancholy nobility—the face of a man who might love once disastrously in defiance of all law, but only once, and then with a terrible and tragic intensity.

So the girl came at last to the third figure in that great romance of buried love and tragedy—the man who had sat alone in his dim room for twenty years, and remembered and hated. She looked upon him, for the first time, dispassionately, mercilessly, as if he were not her father, but a stranger to her. She pictured, in the light of her knowledge of Pender Fleming, the life which must have been led by those two together—Donna Bianca, all sweetness, light, love of joy, soft tenderness, and the stern, glowering, austere man under whose shadow she herself had passed her young life. Vittoria saw it, this pitiful existence, as if with physical eyes, as if it lay spread out before her, and she gave a great cry of sorrow and understanding, and bowed her head over her arms before her mother's portrait, and wept there for a long time.

When at last she composed herself and turned away, it was with a curiously light heart. Her beautiful mother had again been restored to her, and, in the face of that wonderful fact, it seemed that nothing else in the world mattered very much. She knew vaguely that this must probably mean a further estrangement from Pender Fleming, but she did not wish to go into that at present. It was enough that she had her mother back, within arm's reach, and could love and idolise her without fear and without shame. She looked up once more into Donna Bianca's lovely face and she said—

"Oh, my dear, I know—I know! And I'm glad you did what you did. I understand." Then, forgetting that she had come upstairs to change into a riding-skirt, she went down again and out into the gardens.

She did not enter the brick-walled enclosure where she had been earlier that day, but sat down upon a shady bench beside the wide pool where the goldfish swam; and she had not been there above ten minutes when she heard her name shouted from beyond the gate, and Beaumont Temple, in riding clothes, swinging a horn-handled crop, burst in upon her. He said—

"Ah, there you are! I was afraid I'd missed you. Nobody knew, as usual, where you even might possibly be. What's the matter with Pender Fleming? He refuses absolutely to see me. And he hasn't done that for years. Is he ill? What?"

"I'm afraid he's a good deal excited and wrought up, Beau," the girl said, as Temple sat down beside her. "I don't imagine he's ill, quite, but—something happened this morning, and then, afterwards, father and I talked in his study, and—well, he worked himself up into a frightful state."

Temple said: "Ah!" And after a moment, Vittoria went on—

"Someone—a man came here this morning to call on me, and father found us together in the garden and had one of his rages. You know them."

Temple looked at her in silence, an interrogative silence, and presently she became aware that he did not wish to ask who the man was.

"The man was Richard Blake, Beau," she said quietly. "And—I know now about my mother and—his father. It all came out to-day."

Temple turned and leant forward, with his elbows on his knees and his hands clasped about his crop. He began to dig little holes in the earth and to make geometrical designs of great elaboration. After a while he said, as if to himself—

"I have always maintained that extraordinarily fanciful and dramatic things happen in real life. I have always maintained that. Certainly this thing—Creighton Blake's son! And you'd been away a few months only! There's something astoundingly poetic about it. Poor old Pender!" He looked up at the girl gravely.

"My beautiful mother!" Vittoria cried. "Oh, Beau, I understand so well, so well! I've found a portrait of her. I found it in a closed room in the attic where it had been hidden away. And it's all in her face—all of it. She had to be happy. She was like that."

"Yes," said he gravely, "she was like that. She had to be happy."

"And I hope she was!" cried Bianca's daughter. "I hope she had her one year of happiness and died in it—before she was ever sorry. Oh, I understand so well, Beau! I'm glad she did what she did. I'm glad of it!"

The man nodded without speaking, and for a time the two sat in silence. Temple went back to his earthworks, but gave that over and glanced up from it. Vittoria was looking across the garden enclosure to the red opposite wall and, seemingly, through that and far away. Her lips were parted. She smiled very faintly, and the heavy lashes drooped over her eyes. Two flashes of

golden sunlight came down upon her black hair, burning it to a sort of molten copper, and as the leaves overhead stirred in the breeze, the spots of golden light shivered and played as if the molten copper were alive like quicksilver. They made a halo round the girl's splendid head, and a little pang shot through the heart of the man who sat watching. It seemed to him that he had never seen her so magnificently beautiful, not even on that first evening after her return home, and her near presence had never before stirred him so. He watched the lashes that dropped over her eyes, and the little smile that was at her lips, and a sudden spasm of jealousy wrung him, for he knew that her thoughts were very far away in that strange past, and that nothing he could conceivably say or do would ever make her smile in just that fashion.

He had often chaffed with Vittoria about his advanced age, without any seriousness at all, for he neither looked nor felt the four-and-forty to which he was entitled, but in this hour he suddenly felt old and tired and very far away from this beautiful child who had all at once become a woman. The realisation came to him with a sense of dull pain, a sort of bitterness, and he closed his eyes for a moment and took a long deep breath, which was a sigh. The sigh seemed to waken the girl from her dreaming, for she turned with a start, saying—

"Beau!"

"Yes, my dear?" said he gently.

"Beau," she said, "could you tell me more about her—now? About my mother, I mean? Were you here when it—when she went away?"

"No," he said, "I had been abroad for nearly a year at that time. I returned almost immediately after it happened." He gave a sudden exclamation, and Vittoria looked up at him.

"But there is someone who was here," he said. "I had almost forgotten. My housekeeper, Mrs. Callahan—Maggie Callahan—was at Standish when you were born. She was one of Donna Bianca's nurses. When—they went away—when your mother went away, Pender discharged every servant in the house and took new ones. He—couldn't bear to have the others about, I think. Mrs. Callahan came to me, and I took her for housekeeper. You've seen her there for years—all your life."

"Oh, Beau," the girl cried, "if I could only talk to her! Do you think I might?"

"I don't see why not," said he. "You

know the main facts now. I see no reason why Mrs. Callahan shouldn't tell you anything she remembers." He pulled out his watch and looked at it.

"Three o'clock," he said. "Go and put on a riding-skirt, and I'll order your horse from the stable. We'll ride to Lone Tree Hill and interview Mrs. Callahan."

"Ah, you're a dear, Beau!" she said, springing to her feet. "You're a sweet dear! I shan't be ten minutes, so be off to the stable and have Sunrise saddled. I shall be ready as soon as you are."

She kept her word. She was not above ten minutes, and in fifteen the two were off down the drive at a sharp trot, and at Lone Tree Hill in half an hour.

Vittoria sat down in the screened porch, and Temple went into the house. He was gone perhaps five minutes, and when he returned he was accompanied by the old housekeeper, Mrs. Callahan, whom the girl had known since her childhood. The Irishwoman's eyes were round and excited, and she had a frightened air. She made an odd little bobbing curtsy to her master's guest, but Vittoria sprang up and kissed the woman on both cheeks, saying—

"How dare you be formal to me, Maggie Callahan! I'm ashamed of you! You who used to give me cake and tell me stories when I came over here from home! For shame, Maggie Callahan!"

The woman grinned and her eyes twinkled, but it was a brief grin, and she was very obviously ill at ease. She looked towards her master over Vittoria Fleming's shoulder, and Temple nodded to her.

"I've told Mrs. Callahan," said he, "that you know the truth about your mother's going away, and that you want to know any little things she may remember of her and of that time."

"Yes, please, please, Maggie Callahan!" said the girl, and again the housekeeper made her little bobbing curtsy.

"It's little I do know, Miss Vittoria," she protested. "Sure I was there wid her—the poor lamb! I wint there for to nurse her whin ye was bornn, miss, an' I stayed for six months afther—ontil she—she wint away. But there's little I know, belike, that ye've not been told."

"Oh, any little thing!" cried Vittoria. "Any littlest thing that you remember. You loved her, didn't you, Maggie Callahan?"

"Glory be!" said the Irishwoman, "I did that, miss. An' iver wan that iver knew that blessed swate soul loved her. You

couldn't help lovin' her av ye thried. An', so far as I know, no wan iver thried.

"I mind whin ye was borrn, Miss Vittory, an' how she bore ut all—a-beggin' yer pardon, miss, f'r speakin'!—wid niver a cry, but lay there wid a little white smile on the face av her. An' later that night, whin I was alone wid her, an' she'd been asleep, she waked up sudden an' says to me—

"'It's a strong, well child, Maggie dear?'

"I says—

"'A fine great girl, dearie, widout mark or blemish. A fine girl!'

"An' she says—

"'Praise Heaven, I'll bring her up to be happy—happier than I have ever been, Maggie dear. That's what I want her to be,' she says, 'happy!—happy!' An' afther a little time she beckoned me closer to where she lay, an' she says, whisperin' slow—

"'Don't let *him* come in!'

"'Lit who?' says I.

"'My—Misther Fleming,' she says, turnin' her swate face away on the pilla. An' I says—

"'He'll come in over me dead corpse,' I says. 'Niver fear, darlin'! Ye go along wid ye to slape an' lave me watch.' Ah, she was always a-beggin' that av me—askin' yer pardon, miss!—not to lit him come in. He froze her like, wid his sharp tongue and his quare ways. She feared him."

Vittoria nodded her head very slowly. And she said—

"Yes, I know—I know." And presently she said—

"When did you see them together first, Maggie Callahan, my mother and—Mr. Blake?"

"'Twas nigh two months afther ye was borrn, miss," said the housekeeper. "We was walkin' in the gaarden wan fine, soft summer mornin', an' we kem to the shpot where there's a gate alongside that wood lane—the lane that leads north across the hills towards the ould Shaw place. There was somewan kem ridin' along the lane on a big grey horse, an' whin he saw us two a-standin' there, he pulled up the horse an' sat still wid his eyes on yer mother, miss. I mind he dropped his ridin'-whip, an' I want to pick it up for him. He thanked me like a gentleman, but he never rowled his eyes, an' whin I kem back to yer mother, she was starin' too, an' white. Misther Blake looked like he'd been at death's dure. His eyes had big black rings under thim and his cheeks was thin. He says—

"'May I congratulate *ye*, madonna?'

That was the worrd he says. I remimber it. He says—

"'Ye have a treasure now.' An' yer mother looked up at him, an' she says very slow—

"'An anchor, Tony, an anchor in time of sthress.' An' thin nayther av thim says any more, but afther a while Misther Blake bowed—ah, a fine courtly gentleman, he was, an' that handsome!—an' he rode away down the lane."

"And again?" said Vittoria, with her hands clasped together at her breast. "You saw them together again—after that?"

"Many times, miss. Sure, it was many times they was together in the gaarden—the little gaarden wid the owld wall round ut. Yer mother wud always have me there, too, not far away. I dunno why. Ut may be—no, I dunno why! But I remember wan time—the last time. Yer father—Misther Fleming—he kem there an' found thim—not that they'd been a-stealin' away to meet there. They did it open. But Misther Fleming he was always shut up in his lib'ry, an' maybe he didn't know—maybe. Annyways, he kem that mornin', an' he was in wan av his black rages. The things he says was terrible. Wance I thought Misther Blake would lay hands on um where he stood, but yer swate mother, miss, cried out, an' he stepped away. Thin she bid him go—an' he wint, wid wan long luk back in her face. An' yer mother wint very slow up to the house wid her husband. . . . What they said lather I heard, but I cannot say all av ut to ye, Miss Vittory.

"He was still in his black rage, an' he did not pick an' choose his worrds. Wance, I mind, he says to her, the face av him white an' workin'—

"'An' what kind av a woman do ye call yerself, thin?' An' she says, lookin' in his eyes—

"'A slave, Pender—a slave waitin' for death.

"'Heaven send it soon!' says she."

Vittoria gave a sudden gasping sob, and Beaumont Temple came quickly forward.

"That's enough, Vittoria!" he said.

"That's more than enough. This only pains you and makes you suffer. It's all over, my dear, and done with, years ago. Let it rest!" But the girl shook her head, saying—

"No, Beau! No! Let me hear it. Can't you see how I want to hear it? Can't you see how it makes me understand? Please go on, Maggie Callahan. Go on!"

The Irishwoman looked up at her master,



but Temple shrugged his shoulders and turned away.

"Please go on!" the girl begged, and after a moment she said—

"An' that night he tuk the child away from her—her little, little child !

"'Ye're not fit to have ut in yer keepin,' he says to her. 'Ye're not the kind av woman to have an innocent child near to ye !'"

"I knew it !" cried Vittoria. "I knew it. I knew he must have done something like that. Please go on !"

"She said little to 'm, the poor lamb—on'y sat an' looked on wid her white face an' her big black eyes, but when he was leavin' her, she says—

"'Be careful, Pender ! I warn ye !' she says. 'Ye're goin' too far this time. Ye've made my life somethin' very like hell,' she says, 'an' I've borne ut. But av there's any love left in ye for me, Pender, don't take my child away from me. Av ye do, ye'll be sorry.'

"'Ye're not fit to have a child wid ye !' he says agin ; an' she gave a little moan, wid her face becune her two hands, an' he wint out wid the child.

"So ut wint on for three days more, an' she kipt to her room, niver stirrin' out, but on the third night, whin I stole in to her, she was up an' writin' at her table. It was a letther she wrote, an' whin she had sealed ut, she gave ut to me an' says—

"'Take it to Benny, the under-groom,' she says. 'Benny will know what to do wid ut.' She put her head down on my shouldher for a minnut.

"'I have borne all I can bear, Maggie !' she says. 'This is the ind.' An' I says nothin' to her, for there was nothin' to say.

"On the nixt night she wint. I helped her to dress warm and neat for the journey, an' to put the few little things she needed into a bag. At the ind she says—

"'Where is—my child ?' I had the key to the nursery, an' I tuk her there. You were sleepin' in your little bed, miss, an' a night-light was near. The fat pig av a wet-nurse he'd sint for was snorin' acrost the room. Yer mother bint over yer bed an' kissed ye wance on the mouth, an' ye didn't wake. An' she says, whisperin'—

"'Good-bye, me tiny dear. Heaven send ye a betther life than it sint yer mother ! Grow up brave and strong !' she says, an' whin ye're grown up, don't lit annywan choose for ye—choose for yerself !' says she,

'an' whin love calls, oh, answer ! Answer an' go !'

"Thin she kem away an' we wint down through the house an' out, an' I wint wid her acrost the gaardens to the wood lane. He was waitin' there.

"An' she kissed me wance, an' they rode away."

Vittoria bent her head without speaking. After a little time she raised it again, and her eyes were very bright, but there were no tears in them. She took Mrs. Callahan's hands in hers and kissed the woman's cheeks again.

"You were very, very good to my mother," said she. "I wish I could tell you how grateful I am, but I can't. Thank you very much for—telling me."

The Irishwoman looked towards her master, and she twisted her apron between her strong hands. Now that her tale was done, the first embarrassment seemed to return upon her, so that she was flushed and ill at ease. Temple nodded to her, and she turned and went quickly into the house—for some obscure reason, on tiptoe.

Then the man came forward, and Vittoria looked up at him with a little trembling smile.

"I'm sad—for the moment, Beau," said she, "with thinking what my mother suffered, but, oh, I'm glad to know, because now I can be glad that she did what she did, without even the littlest reservation or regret. I had thought and wondered about her leaving her child and going away. Now I understand. He had taken her child from her." The girl's face hardened to a sternness that Temple had never before seen there—it was a bit of the father in her—and she said—

"I can never forgive him that !"

"There is a great deal," said Beau Temple, "that I shall never be able to forgive Pender for, but we mustn't be too hard with him. Even knowing what we know, we mustn't be too hard. Pender was always Pender, you know. He always had much within himself to contend with. He was austere by nature—cold, critical, awkward before any impulse of tenderness. He loved your mother very deeply, but he couldn't show it. And he never understood a woman. They were as far apart as the poles, those two. Their marriage was a hideous mistake, and Pender made it more hideous. I can't forgive him for what he did, but sometimes I pity him very much. He never had a fair chance."

"Had my mother a fair chance ?" the girl demanded. "Had she ? I'm afraid I



"The dinner-party was a dire performance."

can never forgive him, Beau. It hurts me to say that, but it's true."

Temple watched her and knew that it was indeed true. The young can be very cruel sometimes. He had a moment of curiosity, unusual with him, and asked—

"Did Richard Blake know the truth—about what happened long ago?"

"No," she said. "No, he didn't know—not until to-day. His father must have kept it from him, as mine did from me." She looked up.

"I tried," said she, "to make my father see how much Richard Blake did in reparation, even though it was unconscious, when he saved my life. But it only drove him to a greater fury. He was fairly beside himself."

"Beside himself?" queried the man. "About what? Ah, I see! At finding Mr. Blake with you—at finding that you knew him. Yes, of course!"

She had a feeling that it was Beau's right to know everything that had passed, and she told him, as well as she could, of that painful and grotesque interview.

"You understand, of course," she explained, "that he was half insane with excitement. Otherwise, no such idea could have entered his head. He might as well have begged me to promise that I wouldn't marry the King of Arabia—or Griggs, the butler. . . . But, Beau——" She was very eager to tell him everything. For some obscure reason, something like their old relations seemed, at least on the girl's side, to have recurred between them. "Beau, Mr. Blake did begin this morning to—say that he—liked me. That was before I had told him of my engagement." She kept her eyes turned away, and she did not know that her cheeks were flushed, but the man standing near, watchful and grave, saw it all.

"You see," she said, "when I met him in London, I liked him. He seemed very nice. But he never came near me when it could be helped. I thought he disliked me. And when I met him yesterday at Cedar Hill, he was almost rude. So then I was sure of it. It made me angry, because I wanted to be grateful to him and—and hospitable, and all that, on account of his saving my life. He made me angry, and that was why I said to you what I did about him when I came on here yesterday morning. It seems I—misunderstood him. He—well, it doesn't matter, anyhow, because, since father feels so bitter, I couldn't possibly see Mr. Blake. I dare say he'll go back to town at

once. He'll realise that his staying on in the neighbourhood would make it awkward for everybody.

"So now," she said, with a little laugh—"now you know all about everything." And Temple nodded slowly, saying—

"Yes, now I know all about it." He regarded her for another brief moment, and began to walk up and down the length of the porch, his hands stuck in the pockets of his coat, and his head bent. Once he halted and made as if he would speak, then shook his head and once more took up his silent tramp. But after a little time, Vittoria rose to her feet with a sigh. She said—

"I think, if you don't mind, Beau, I'll just go home. I want to think—about my mother. Maggie Callahan has given me so much to think about. I want to be quite alone. You understand, don't you, Beau? You always understand."

"Always, I hope," said he. "I hope so, my dear." He blew his dog whistle, and a groom came presently round from the side of the house, leading the two horses. He put Vittoria up, sent his own nag back to the stable, and stood watching while the girl rode away.

She reined in a few paces off, to call back—

"Where is M. de Coucy? I forgot to ask about him." Temple told her that the Frenchman was riding—a feat he managed and enjoyed with the aid of a leading rein held by his servant, who rode close beside him. So then Vittoria went on down the hill, and the man stood on the steps of his porch and watched her out of sight.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### TWO LETTERS.

VITTORIA wrote a letter to Richard Blake. She wrote it after much thoughtful hesitation, and she made many false starts, and even tore up two completed efforts. This is what she finally sent to him—

"MY DEAR MR. BLAKE,—

"I am writing to you out of what seems to me something like a sense of obligation—obligation to you and to my dear mother and to your father. If there were any probability of our meeting soon again, I could tell you what I wish to say much more easily and much better than I can write it, but you will understand, after the dreadful scene in the garden yesterday, how impossible it will be for me to see you, in view of my father's bitterness and hard feeling.

"And I need not, I am sure, even make any apology for his words, though they were insulting and unbearable. You know the cause of them, and you know how he feels about what happened so long ago. If nothing more had developed than what we learnt together from my father's words, I should have nothing to say, but I know a great deal more now, and I must tell you some of it for the sake of your own peace of mind and for the sake of those two who loved each other so much. You see, I am aware that your father is far away, so that you cannot reach him, and I can't bear to have you go on for a long time in ignorance of the real truth.

"So here is what I have learnt from certain people who know——"

She went on to tell Blake what she had heard from Beau Temple and from Mrs. Callahan, Bianca's nurse, but she put it much more briefly than it had come to her, and she tried to spare her father as far as she was able. She was anxious merely to clear her mother's memory and to clear Creighton Blake's name also.

"You see," she concluded, "how it was with them. My poor mother's life had become unendurable, impossible. She would have borne it even then, I am sure, or perhaps have killed herself, but he took her little child from her, and that was too much. I want you to know that, for my part, I understand and forgive and am glad. To be sure, she died, my beautiful mother, even though what she longed for came to her, but I like to think that she died happy. Indeed, I am sure that she did, for she had love at last and understanding and tenderness—her sunlight. She had one perfect year. It must have been a perfect year, must it not? It would hurt me very cruelly to think that she suffered, or regretted what she had done, or that any littlest thing came between the two of them to dim that sunlight.

"I want you to know that I feel no bitterness towards your father, rather a deep and earnest gratitude for what he did—it is as if he had saved my mother from death. Indeed, did he not save her from worse than that? This sounds a little dreadful for me to say, I expect, but it is true, and I mean it. It sounds and is, of course, disloyal to my own father, but I cannot help it.

"And that is all I have to tell you. Most people would maintain that it is very wrong

to tell you anything at all, but I believe it is right. You ought to know. I suppose we shall not see each other for a long time, perhaps not until after my marriage—for which there is as yet no date arranged—since I shall be here in the country until that occurs. Afterwards we are more or less likely to meet in London. So, since this is a long good-bye, let me try once more to say 'Thank you' (such poor and absurdly inadequate words!) for what you did for me once when I was in grave danger. Do you know, it is very sweet to me to think that Creighton Blake's son saved my life. My mother would be glad of it, wouldn't she?

"Good-bye! I will say—I can say no more of what passed between us on our last meeting—I mean before my father came—than to beg you to go back to your own good life, which I know you have loved well, and forget that you ever for a moment wished to give it up. I do not ask you or want you to forget me quite, for there is a certain intimate bond which must always be between Creighton Blake's son and Bianca Fleming's daughter. Remember me, but in another way, and I shall remember you, and wish you everything that is good.

"Sincerely yours,

"VITTORIA FLEMING."

She was a woman, and therefore added a postscript.

"Perhaps, when you write to your father, or when you next talk with him, you will tell him how I feel about it all. I think I should like him to know."

Vittoria sent this letter to Cedar Hill, for though she thought it probable that Blake had returned to town, she knew no other address. And, indeed, he had gone away, despite the Farings' protests, as she afterwards learnt by telephone from Béatrix. But within two days she had an answer from him, and, when it was put into her hands from the afternoon post, took it down into her rose garden to read. It was a long letter, but she read it over two or three times, then put it into the bosom of her frock for safe keeping, and read it once again when she dressed for dinner. She fell into a way of carrying the folded close-written sheets about with her—always in her bosom for safe keeping—and when she was out on her solitary walks or was sitting alone in her garden enclosure, she read them over until she knew the letter almost by

heart. Then one day she, as it were, caught herself at it, perceived that the paper bore signs of age and wear, realised that it had gone next her heart for a week, and locked it away in a sort of paroxysm of shamed self-scorn.

Blake looked upon the matter exactly as she did, and as she had felt sure he would do, but he seemed to have had small need of portraits or other extraneous aids in coming to his conclusion: he seemed to have reached it at once, in a single leap, taking his bearings from what he knew of his father, what he observed in Pender Fleming, and what he guessed of Pender's wife. But he expressed himself as being very much touched and affected by what Vittoria told him in her letter, and immensely grateful to her for the telling. So he came to the other matter upon which she had dwelt in conclusion. He thanked her for her expressions, but he said that what she asked of him was impossible. He seemed to have used great care in his language, so that he should not appear to be making love to another man's *fiancée*, but he said, as he had said during that interview in the walled garden, that he could not give up hope of her, for the hope was his life. He was not an eloquent man, either in spoken or written speech, but there was something in the ring of the short, terse sentences that he spoke or wrote which was much better, infinitely more appealing, than any flowery expressions could have been, and there was more eloquence in the things he left unsaid in this letter than in the things he tried to express. They stood out in blazing characters from between the written lines—the fierce and tender and compelling love words that Blake would not write; and Vittoria read them there, and her heart beat faster because of them, and she turned a little pale. And once or twice, when she had been reading the letter, she closed her eyes and called up the image of Richard Blake before her—only that is saying a little too much, for she made no actual effort; she waited an instant in a sort of blind silence of the spirit, and he came. But when she had done that, she was ashamed, and reproached herself, and put the whole matter away in the back of her mind—at the bottom of the well.

So Blake went away, since that seemed the only possible thing to do, but he did not go very far away, and he had no intention whatever of returning, as Vittoria begged him to do, to the old life which he had loved so well. That love was gone for ever.

He sat, as it were, apart, on the horizon line, and watched and bode his time.

But there was no doubt that his retirement from the field removed an intolerable strain, and left those at Standish or in its neighbourhood to settle down into a pleasant state of leisurely calm. Vittoria went often to Cedar Hill, and Béatrix Faring came almost as often to Standish. The two fell into a habit of riding together nearly every morning, while the elder woman's lord and master toiled laboriously and resentfully over his monograph. Beau Temple rode with them sometimes, and between him and Béatrix Faring there began to spring up a friendship which afterwards grew and ripened, and far outlasted the brief span of events with which this chronicle has to do, and bids fair to endure as long as they both shall live—a good friendship born of natural sympathy and understanding and mutual admiration.

Early in the course of this period Vittoria had a dinner-party at Standish, to which the Farings and Beau Temple and M. de Coucy were bidden. Pender Fleming came to the head of his table fairly clanking, as it were, in an armour of grim determinations to do his utmost, and, without doubt, he did it. Never was a braver attempt on the part of the dead to live again, but at that it was a dire performance—hopeless from the beginning—and afterwards, when the two women had gone to the drawing-room for their coffee, they laughed over it quite frankly and without malice.

"My dear child," Béatrix said, "it's no good, really. The poor man suffers quite too much. I could hardly eat for pity of him. We mustn't make him do it any more. You must talk to him to-morrow, and tell him that we all understand how he has got out of the way of company, and that nobody's feelings will be hurt if he doesn't turn up at any little parties we may have at Cedar Hill, or that Mr. Temple may have at his place. Fancy! he's probably staying awake at night to agonise over the prospect of interminable entertainments. You must put him out of pain at once." So on the next morning Vittoria followed this suggestion, and while her father only said a gruff "Yes, yes, quite so!" or something like that, she saw the immense relief that spread over his face, and knew what a load had gone from his mind.

So for a little time the three households, excluding the master of Standish, went freely back and forth, rode, played tennis and golf, motored in the Farings' cars, met for dinner,

and altogether amused themselves very successfully. It was, for Vittoria, a time of obscure development, of hidden growth. She was inexplicably aware of it. Very deep within her something was moving, like an underground river, very slow, but irresistible. She did not know what it was, nor whither it tended, but she knew that it was there, hidden, silent, flowing mysteriously on towards regions unguessed, and she wondered about it, but incuriously, because she was rather apathetic just then.

She was in a state of passive content, or something very like content. She had her beautiful mother to comfort her night and day—that strange and thrilling story to reflect upon and to dream over: she had the companionship of Béatrix Faring, of whom she was truly fond, and she had Beau Temple—cheerfullest, most tactful, least exigent of all lovers. Even in her mental attitude towards her father—very bitter after the first hearing of that pathetic history of long ago—she had come to a quieter, more tolerant state. She had not forgiven him, and she never would; but she understood the man's nature much more readily than most young girls could have done, and she realised that, as Beau Temple had said, he had a great deal in himself to contend with. Still, the gulf which was always between daughter and father had been widened by her new knowledge. She pitied him and made certain excuses for him, but she could not forget that he had taken her mother's little child from her.

She saw Beau Temple very often. He had established a habit of coming to Standish every afternoon, however the mornings might have been spent, and the two had an hour alone in Vittoria's garden. The man was wise and watchful—held himself with a hard hand. Vittoria did not know it at the time, but afterwards she knew, and appreciated, and realised how much it must have cost him. He managed that their old relation should seem but little changed, and he managed so well that she was quite unconscious of the fact. They spoke often of their life to come, made plans and discussed them.

"After we've been very gay and dissolute for a year or two," Vittoria said, "then we shall probably want to settle down quietly once more—here in the country. For, of course, the books must go on. Consider the feelings of the 'chosen few'! But at first, Beau dear, I do want to play. I've had so little play, you know—just enough to want a lot more." And Temple said emphatically—

"You shall have it! You shall have all you want of it. I'm no Barbe-bleu. You shall play to your heart's content, and I'll come gambolling along behind as giddily as my rheumatic old legs can manage.

"I wonder," he said, with a questioning frown—"I wonder, now, if I shan't seem a rather absurd and heavy-footed elderly goat. I wonder if I shan't seem to drag upon you." The question seemed to be presented to Vittoria's mind rather than to his own. He regarded her keenly.

But the girl was a little angry, and said—

"Don't be an idiot, Beau! You seem to be making yourself out about sixty. If you want to adopt a *vieillard* pose, you'll have to make some important changes in personal appearance. 'Elderly goat,' indeed!"

He flushed a little with pleasure at her scorn, but still shook his head.

"Well, I might get fat," he pointed out, and this time roused her. She cried—

"You shall do nothing of the kind! That's one thing I won't endure. I'll not have you fat. You'll have to get up early in the morning and run eight miles before breakfast with a sweater on. You'll have to take the anti-things that one reads about in the papers. I won't have you fat! We'll agree upon a weight—a maximum—and whenever you reach that, you'll have to live on biscuits and hot water for a fortnight. Oh, it's very easy, if you're firm about it."

"I perceive," said Beau Temple, "that there is to be some firmness in the family, whether it belongs to me or not. You map out one of the most peaceful old ages I have ever heard of, but, if you don't mind, I think I should like a plain, unostentatious poison when that maximum weight comes true. It's both simple and more certain."

Afterwards, when Vittoria looked back upon this fortnight of daily meetings, she was astonished to find how almost completely they were steeped in this spirit of mild and rather foolish banter. She wondered if that had all been Temple's doing, or if he had just started it so and let it take its course, or if he had been merely passive in the matter. In any case, she knew then that he had pressed her with no lover's ardour, made no demands upon her, begged for no vows of affection. She was touched and grateful when she remembered that, and she would have been both touched and grateful at the time if she had realised it.

Afterwards she remembered also an odd little scene, which was a sort of keynote to



all this—very significant, if she had but known. It chanced that their first two or three meetings, after the engagement was made definite, were within sight or hearing of somebody. The first time, as has been told, a gardener was near, the second time a groom. So it was that the first occasion upon which they met quite alone was in Vittoria's garden a day or two after Richard Blake's return to London. Vittoria was sitting there with a magazine when Temple arrived, and she had expected him and was not taken by surprise. She rose to her feet with a little exclamation of welcome, and put out her hands. The man took them, moved near, and bent over her. She had been used to kissing him in a childlike fashion all her life, and she raised her beautiful face as calmly as she had done ten years before—not a gleam in her of the consciousness of a difference. So they stood for a brief instant, and it is not improbable that pulses quickened and throbbed and beat in the man. But he made a sound like a little sigh, bent his head aside, kissed her cheek, as a hundred times before, and stood away from her.

Vittoria remembered that, and it brought tears to her eyes.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### MR. TEMPLE IS TRIED IN THE FIRE.

"It has only just gone twelve," said Béatrix Faring, looking at the watch on her wrist. "Let Jimmy take your horse round with mine, and help me use up some of the hour and a half before luncheon—unless you'll stay and lunch with us, which would be better still?" The two had been riding together. Temple took her down, and the stable boy led away the horses.

"I can't lunch with you to-day," he said, "because De Coucy will be expecting me, but I'll stay for a half hour with pleasure. Shall we go into the house or stop here in the porch?"

"We'll go to my little summer-house thing," Mrs. Faring decided. "It's shady at this time of the day, and the view is too lovely for words. I've had a comfortable seat put in it, and an awning stretched overhead, so that beasts can't drop into my hair; and I often sit there with a book or with my letters." She fastened her riding-skirt, and they set off across the turf towards the tiny summer-house which stood on the brink of the hill.

The little structure had but three sides, and they were mere latticed trellises where ivy clung thick and strong. There was a mouldy roof, from whose varied fauna one was protected by the subjoined awning, and a mouldy floor, which was covered by a rug. The comfortable seat of which Mrs. Faring had spoken stood invitingly empty, and beside it a table was littered with magazines and with writing things and with boxes of cigarettes. Béatrix had not spoken over strongly of the view. It was indeed too lovely for words—a wide sweep of rolling country which extended fanwise from Mickleford at the south to the low green northern hills: very many miles of wood and meadow and fat, tilled land, with, here and there, the odd, solitary upcropping rises such as Standish and Lone Tree and Cedar Hill lay upon—a very peaceful picture of green and brown domed over by blue, unclouded sky, smudged here and there by village smoke, picked out, as to high lights, by the white of village steeples.

Béatrix Faring made herself comfortable at one end of the double seat, and, after a space of silent gazing, the man joined her.

"You have cigarettes, of course?" she said. "You'd better smoke them than accept mine, because mine are some silly little Russian ones that a misguided friend sent me. But for a naturally thrifty disposition, I should have thrown them away long ago. Instead, I resentfully consume them, hoping against hope that the three hundred I have left will turn mouldy or something. Of course they won't."

She lighted one of the maligned cylinders and leant back in her place, watching the man who sat beside her silent, his hands clasped over his knees, his face turned out over the sunlit valley. And after a somewhat long pause, she said, still watching him—

"Do you know, being engaged doesn't seem to agree with you altogether. You don't look—well. You look rather tired and fagged." Temple turned to her with a laugh.

"Oh, that's in the part!" said he. "That's all in the stage directions. Lover's pallor—frenzied eye—careless dress—general neglect—all that sort of thing!" But she shook her head at him.

"Those are the stage directions—or used to be—for the hopeless lover, not the successful one. You ought to be going about in gay waistcoats and a silly perpetual smile. No, it hasn't agreed with you. I wonder—"

"I believe," she mocked, "that you're a little afraid. I believe you've been looking ahead at the mangled fragments that your nice, quiet, peaceful life is going to be torn into. It *will* be a change, won't it?"

"Yes," said Beaumont Temple, smiling. "Yes, it certainly will be a change."

"The 'chosen few,' now!" she said, still in her gently mocking tone. "What will they think of it? Their sacred apostle marrying a giddy young girl and sitting up late of nights at dancing parties. Dear me! What will the 'chosen few' think about it?"

"Hang the 'chosen few'!" said Temple violently; but she shook her head at him.

"Oh, no! You can't dismiss them with a hang. You made them. They're yours. They hold up their little beaks to you to be fed, and you're the responsible feeding 'party.' You can't shirk your responsibilities like that, you know. Gracious me! Suppose marriage should suddenly turn you into a romanticist! Just suppose that! It might, you know. Beaumont Temple writing about rose gardens and first kisses and hard-hearted parents! Oh me, oh my! The very thought gives me a chill."

Seemingly, it did not chill the apostle of the "chosen few," for he laughed, and after a moment laughed again. But abruptly Béatrix Faring dropped her tone of banter, and she regarded the man for a little space in grave silence. At its end—

"We've become what one might call very good friends," she said. "Haven't we?"

"I think one might call it that without exaggeration," said he. "I hope we have become very good friends indeed. It—is a friendship I shouldn't like to think of doing without, now that I know its value."

"We've both," said the woman, "seen a good deal, and suffered somewhat, and grown, I hope, wiser than we were. I'm inclined to take advantage of our friendship to speak plainly. May I?" And when he said: "Please do!" she went on, choosing her words with a slow care.

"I know that dear girl rather well, and I think I know you more than a little. You'll be very good to her, very forbearing, full of self-sacrifice, full of tenderness. She'll be in wise and gentle hands—and yet—I wonder if it's wise for you two to marry. I think I'm afraid about it." She saw that the man's face was grave and a little pale. She saw his lips move dumbly and thought they tried to say: "Why? Why?"

"The child is so young," she said—"so very young, and so eager. She has such a

passionate hunger for—what shall I say?—for the love that only a young man has it in him to give: the young love, the young, fierce, tumultuous love that has no humour in it. Afterwards the fires burn lower—leaping flame sinks to the steady, enduring glow. We both know that, you and I. And we know that the quiet, steady fire burns longest—warms us for a lifetime—that flames leap and devour for only a little while. But we wouldn't have gone without the leaping flames, not for anything in this world! We cherish the wonderful memory of them. They're romance. That's what they are—romance. And they burn only when one is very young and has, for the time being, no humour."

She looked at Beaumont Temple challengingly.

"You've had your romance—or tales I have heard were lies."

"Yes," said he, chafing his broad hands together and looking down upon them.

"Yes," he said, in a low voice, "I've had my romance—and buried it—long ago. And yet——" A little flush came over his face.

"It is," said he, "an odd fact that, even at four-and-forty, the flames can leap up in one—amazing flames. I hadn't thought it possible, but I know it to be true. I—don't go to her with quite an old man's love, you know. It's hardly May and December between Vittoria and me."

"No," said Béatrix Faring. "Shall we say May and October? Even then——"

"I love her!" cried the man, with a sudden sharpness. "I think I have loved her for years—and hoped—and waited. Would you have me give her up now at the last—now, when she has come to me of her own accord? She trusts me—turns to me. She has always turned to me, brought me her troubles, perplexities, all her life. And she says that she loves me. It may not be that she—that she feels for me any great and overwhelming passion. She doesn't, I confess. But about the need for that—I'm not so sure. The flames you talk of may sear and destroy, you know. As often as not they ravage instead of warming. I'm not so sure."

"Don't cheat Vittoria out of her romance!" the woman said. And she said—

"I know that you love her—I can't pretend to attack that—and I know she loves you. But is it in the right way? Don't you see? I'm fighting with you for Vittoria's youth—for her right to that mad and foolish and divine and absurd young

love that you'd cheat her of. If you marry her, one of two things will happen—either the two of you will go through a sort of absurd parody of the kind of life Vittoria loves and longs for (and you'd play an unbecoming part there, my friend; you would, truly), or else you will settle down quietly here in the country to the sort of life you yourself have, for the past fifteen or twenty years, lived and enjoyed. In other words, one of you must inevitably be sacrificed to the other, for your tastes and desires are as far apart as pole from pole. Can real happiness come of such a marriage as that ? ”

Beaumont Temple took his head into his hands.

“ You speak very plain words,” said he. “ You paint in cardinal colours. But I thank you for it. The wounds of a friend. . . . Of course, any sacrifice made would be made by me. That is understood between us. And I think I could conceal the sacrifice. Perhaps not. I don't know. Doubtless she would in time find out. Vittoria is not dull.” He dropped his hands and faced the woman with a little wry smile. The scene was costing him something. His face looked thinner.

“ I seem to see the black cap on your head,” said he. “ I seem to be listening to something like a death sentence—though I am not yet sure that I concur in it, and that, also, is necessary. One reads one's own sentence in these vital matters. One is both judge and hangman. I'm not yet sworn into office. It wants thought.” His eyes sharpened.

“ You talk much of romance and young love. You're speaking with a purpose—something beyond. What is it you have in your mind ? ”

“ I have Richard Blake in my mind,” she said. “ I think the child loves him, and I know very well that he loves her.”

Temple gave an exclamation, and for some little time thereafter was silent, with bent head, his hands restless upon his knees.

Mrs. Faring made out that he said finally—  
“ The black cap indeed ! ”

He looked up at her.

“ I feared it,” said he. “ I was afraid of that, but I wouldn't face my fear. I was cowardly. When the thought came, I hustled it away and tried to pretend that it wasn't there. Creighton Blake's son ! ”

“ He saved her life, you know.”

“ Yes ! A life for a life. The score would seem to be even, poetically speaking. But Pender will never see it in that light.

Pender's inflexible—as hard as granite. . . . Creighton Blake's son ! Ah, I have somewhat of Pender's feeling there. Rather anyone else in the world ! Anyone ! There's something terrible in the thought.”

“ There is nothing terrible in it to me,” said Béatrix Faring. “ I see beauty in it—the white magic—something bigger and simpler and more fatal than we often see in this age of ours—the consummation of tremendous things begun long ago. It seems to me that it must have been meant to happen. I cannot believe that Vittoria Fleming and Richard Blake fell in with each other by accident—that he saved her life by wanton chance. I think those two, whether they know it or not, are playing out their part in a great drama. Don't stand in the way ! Don't interfere ! ” Her eyes widened a little upon Beau Temple's eyes—showed something like dread.

“ Don't get in the way ! ” she said again. “ I have a very strong feeling that even if you should—you couldn't stop the play those two are playing. You might make it worse—pitiable—tragic, like that older case—the—shall I say it?—the first act. But I have a feeling that you couldn't stop it, you know.”

She added quaintly—

“ Are the Fates still alive, do you think, and working, in these matter-of-fact Christian days of ours ? ”

“ I am forced to believe they are,” said the man. “ Fate—since we must give a name to forces we see so dimly, know so little of—'Fate' is as good a name as another.” He looked upon her heavily, with sad eyes, and she saw that she had stirred him to the bottom. Yet there was strength left in him to cry out. He demanded—

“ How shall one know that she loves this man ? ” And Béatrix said—

“ I have a woman's eyes. I have seen.”

“ Yet she turned from him to me.”

“ Oh, my friend,” said the woman, “ is not that proof enough ? Consider the circumstances of that turning. She loves him. She may not know it fully. She doesn't confess it even to her secret soul, I'll be bound. But she loves him, and she'll go to him in the end, even though laws be broken and hearts with them. Don't help to set laws in the way ! ”

“ There's Pender ! ” said the man. “ Even were I to clear the path for her, there remains Pender, looming above. You know the rash promise Vittoria made to him. She'll keep that. She never breaks her word. She'll break her heart first.”



"She looked at Beaumont Temple challengingly."

"Yet in the end she'll go," said Béatrix Faring. "Hearts break and then the strength goes—the strength to resist. Little by little it goes—trickling away—and then comes a sort of blind madness—a fury of despair. And then the end. I speak of what I know. Mr. Fleming must be made to give Vittoria back her promise."

Beau Temple broke into a brief, mirthless sound of laughter.

"Who can make Pender do that?"

"You, perhaps," said she.

The man stared at her whitely. And after a pause he said—

"You drive hard."

"I am fighting for Vittoria Fleming's happiness," said she. "And perhaps I'm fighting for yours too. I fight as I can. But I think I have said no more than the truth. Can you deny anything I have said—in spirit?—the words are nothing."

"I neither affirm nor deny," he said. "I wait—and reflect." And after a pause he spoke again—

"I want her to be happy. I want happiness for her. That's all. What if, in giving

her her freedom now, I abandon her to misery? Who can be sure?"

"No one," said Mrs. Faring. "No one can be sure of the future, I think. One can only do what seems to be right."

Temple had risen to his feet, and, as he said the last words, he stood facing the woman, his back to the wide view of rolling hills. By chance his eyes met a space of the lattice work where the ivy had died away. He said—

"A young man is coming down from the house, in this direction. Who can it be?" Béatrix Faring turned to look, and turned back with flushed cheeks.

"It is Richard Blake," she said. "I was going to tell you that he is here. He came for a day or two only, in response to a call from Harry, who wanted to consult him about this monograph matter. He will go back to town to-morrow, and Vittoria need not know that he has been here. Shall I go and take him away somewhere while you get your horse?"

Beaumont Temple draw a little sigh.

"Let him come," said he; "and, if you do not mind, leave us alone together."

(To be continued.)

## LA MAISON DE LA HAUTE PLAISANCE.

**A** GREEN-LAWNED house, with floating auriflamme  
Rose-grown—*La Maison de la Haute Plaisance*.

The House of Dreaming was its other name,  
Or, as some said: "*de la Bonne Espérance*."

Came a pale beggar with a fretful cry:

"Oh, let me in where the gold sunshine streams,  
Open to me, a little Grief am I,  
Make room for me within your House of Dreams."

Came yet another, lay before the door:

"Open to me, I am a little Sin,  
A little Sin, make room, I ask no more,  
Your House of Dreams is wide, oh, let me in!"

Dusk shrouds *La Maison de la Haute Plaisance*,

Nor sun shines now nor any taper gleams,  
Men call it "*Maison de la Belle Souffrance*";  
But no dream dwells within my House of Dreams.

UNA ARTEVELDE TAYLOR.



"THE EXPULSION OF THE DANES FROM MANCHESTER IN THE REIGN OF ALFRED'S SON, EDWARD THE ELDER." BY FORD MADDOX BROWN.

*From the fresco in the Manchester Town Hall, reproduced by permission of the Corporation.*

## ENGLAND'S STORY IN PORTRAIT AND PICTURE.

### IV. FROM THE DEATH OF ALFRED TO THE ACCESSION OF HAROLD II.

WITHIN the period at the extremes of which stand, sentinel-like, the figures of Alfred the Great and Harold, we have to forego the intimate sight yielded us by means of the great mentality of the one and the pathetic fortunes of the other; and the one hundred and sixty-six years that divide them are like an instrument on the strings of which Time has so heavily laid his hand that, in place of a clear vibration, they give forth but a dull, confused sound.

To the years in which Alfred filled the throne we bring a sympathy which serves as second sight; but, with his passing, the clearness of our vision fades, and even the outlines of the actors in the scenes that follow are blurred.

On the death of Alfred in 900 (*circa*), his son Edward, a warrior from his youth—recognised long afterwards by the distinguishing suffix "the Elder," as means of separating his identity from that of Edward the Martyr and Edward the Confessor—was raised to kingship by the Witan. As he fulfilled the necessary condition of being of the royal line of Cerdic, the claims of Ethelwald, son of Alfred's elder brother and predecessor on the throne, Ethelred, were put aside in his favour, probably because Edward

was Alfred's son, and had already distinguished himself in the field, or because Ethelwald had offended the taste of the senators by marrying from the convent of Wimborne, and without the bishop's dispensation, "a woman who had before been hallowed as a nun."

Ethelwald, immediately on Edward's accession, leagued himself with the northern Danes, and, until his death in battle in 905, the kingdom was in a state of unrest, and Watling Street became the imaginary line of a sort of Tom Tiddler's ground, so constant were the incursions and retreats, the sorties and successes, of the Danish army of the north.

In 912 the Ealdorman of Mercia died, and upon his death the government of that province, with the exceptions of London and Oxford, which places lapsed to the Crown, was ably taken over by his widow, Elfrida, Edward's sister, a type of Amazon known henceforth as "The Lady of the Mercians." The warrior in her had precedence of the sovereign, and, as warrior, she henceforth took part in her brother's battles. She warred for him in Derby, which she conquered, as she conquered also Leicester and even York. The speculative boldness of her enterprise, being not inferior





"THE CROWNING OF EDWARD, ELDEST SON OF ALFRED, IN KINGSTON MARKET-PLACE, A.D. 901."  
BY R. CATON WOODVILLE.

to her strategic wisdom, she joined Edward in making that series of fortifications which marked him, in military policy, as a worthy successor of his father. A chain of fortified towns thus arose, from which the Danish population was first expelled—Wigmore,

Bridgnorth, Cherbury, Stafford, Wedsborough, Runcorn, Thelwall, Bakewell, Manchester, Nottingham, Tamworth, Leicester, Warwick, Stamford, Towcester, Bedford, Hertford, Colchester, Witham, and Maldon. This presented a strong boundary of defence

against future hostilities of the exuberant, overflowing Norsemen.

Elfrida died in 918, and although she left a daughter, named Elfwyn, who for some months appears to have wielded an authority not unlike that which her mother exercised, we soon hear of Edward taking the government of Mercia into his own hands, and depriving his niece of her power. About the same time he seems to have completely resumed sway over East Anglia, and thus the whole country south of the Humber became obedient to him, as did also North Wales. The Saxon chronicler says that both the King of the Scots and the King of Strathclyde acknowledged him as overlord, but this point has been much disputed ever since the first Plantagenet Edward urged it as a justification of his Scottish wars. The arguments of both sides are skilfully set forth by Dr. Hodgkin in that valuable work "The Political History of England." Certainly, in these last years of his reign, Edward the Elder stands forth,



"ATHELSTAN ORDERING THE BIBLE TO BE TRANSLATED INTO SAXON."

*Engraving by Wale.*

against the still, sullen background of disaffection, a brilliant, martial figure, and he left a kingdom much larger and more closely knit than that which he had received from his illustrious father, Alfred.

He died in the year 924, and was buried at Winchester, in the same monastery where his father, Alfred, and his brother Ethelward lay, and with him was buried his own eldest son.

His eldest surviving son, Athelstan, who succeeded to the throne, was crowned at Kingston-on-Thames in 926.

We have few concrete pictures of those years to inspire our mental sight beyond the bounds of meagre circumstance, and no haunting phrases by means of which to draw the Saxon monarchs of this age forth from "the dark backward and abysm of time" and place them abreast with us to-day, as Shakespeare brought Macbeth, stamping, with an absolute definiteness of imagery, the portrait of that other monarch of the period with which we are dealing in this article.



"ATHELSTAN SAVING THE LIFE OF HIS FATHER, EDWARD THE ELDER, AT THE BATTLE OF SHERWOOD, BY TAKING LEOFRIC THE DANE PRISONER."

*Engraving by Wale.*

For this reason, probably, but few artists have been inspired by themes from this period of our country's story, but Athelstan is here depicted in the act of saving the life of his father, Edward, at the battle of Sherwood,

he had sat on the knee of his grandfather, Alfred, listening to the great events of his future being prognosticated, and was invested, perhaps in jest, with the dignity that then answered to that of knighthood,



"EDWY RECALLED BY DUNSTAN TO HIS CORONATION BANQUET FROM THE COMPANY OF ELGIVA AND HER MOTHER, 955." BY W. HAMILTON, R.A.

and also ordering the Bible to be translated. Wanley says that there is a manuscript "very elegantly written about the time of Athelstan," that it contains Jerome's Latin Psalter with an interlined Saxon version. We know, also, that, as a six-year-old child,

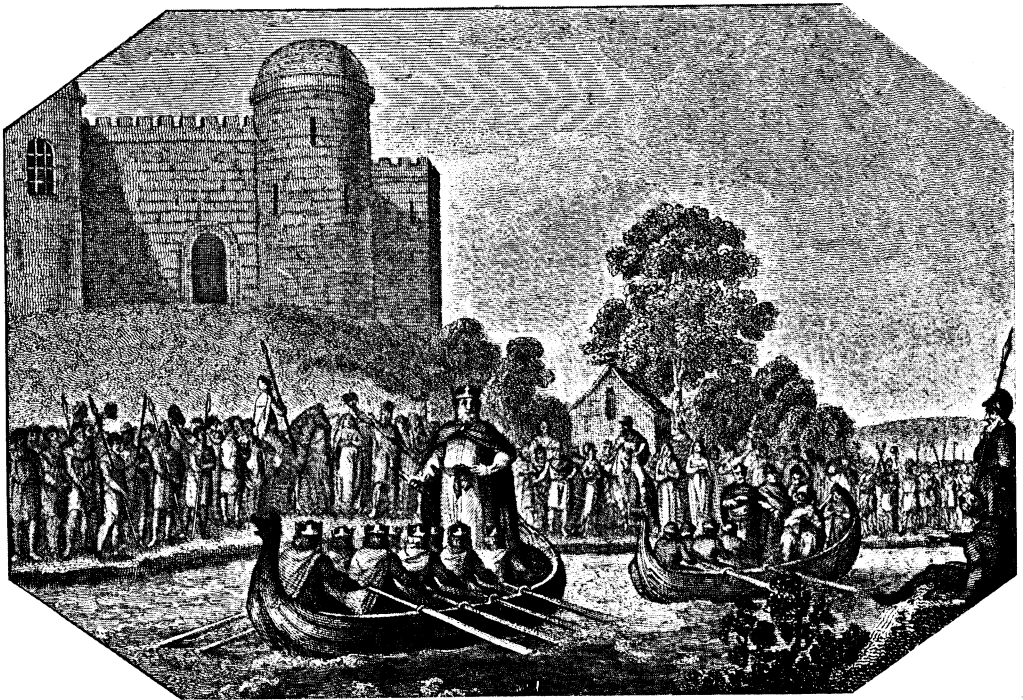
and given as playthings a jewelled belt and a Saxon sword with golden sheath. He is nearer to us in these small scenes than he is under the title "Lord of all Britain." Yet as king he established the Saxon sovereignty over Northumbria for the first

time, subjugated the Cornish Howel, and, finally, in the great battle of Brunanburh, defeated the Scottish "crafty one," Constantius, and his Norse, Irish, and Welsh allies.

His father, Edward, had married several daughters to Continental rulers, and Athelstan connected himself in friendship with others by marrying his half-sisters one to the King of France, another to the French Duke, Hugh the Great, by whom she became the mother of Hugh Capet; yet another to Otto of Germany, later to be Emperor of Rome; and his own sister to Sitric, the Dane, the reigning king in Northumbria.

deed-doer," who was eighteen years old and the eldest surviving son of Edward the Elder. He was to Athelstan "in courage not inferior," and earned his sobriquet of "dear deed-doer" by freeing Mercia from the Danes, conquering Cumberland, which he gave to Malcolm, King of Scots, thereby securing his help for wars both by sea and land, and thus establishing the vassalage of the Scottish Crown. Edmund died, after a reign of but six years, by the dagger of a noted thief, Leof, whom at the time of his accession he had banished the kingdom.

Edmund married twice, and the two



"THE TRIBUTARY KINGS OF WALES ROWING KING EDGAR DOWN THE RIVER DEE." BY H. HAMILTON.

There is no record of Athelstan's ever having married. He died in the forty-seventh year of his age, in 940, having reigned for fifteen years, and left the first united English kingdom as distinct from subdivided nationalities. The only action detrimental to his fame of which his memory is accused, and this but upon most uncertain foundation, is that of causing his brother Edwyn's death by sending him, as punishment for conspiracy, to sea in a "rotten bark."

Athelstan was succeeded by his brother Edmund, "the magnificent," "the dear

children of his first wife, Elgiva the Saint, to use the Latinised form of her Saxon name, Edwy and Edgar, reigned after him, but not immediately, for Edred, his brother, two years his junior, was elected king by a Witan which was no longer merely West-Saxon, but, as J. R. Green points out, included Norsemen and Welsh-Britons as well. Kingston was again the scene of coronation.

The reign of Edred lasted nine years—from 946 to 955—and Dunstan, in his twenty-first year when Edred succeeded, was responsible for much of its value to the country.



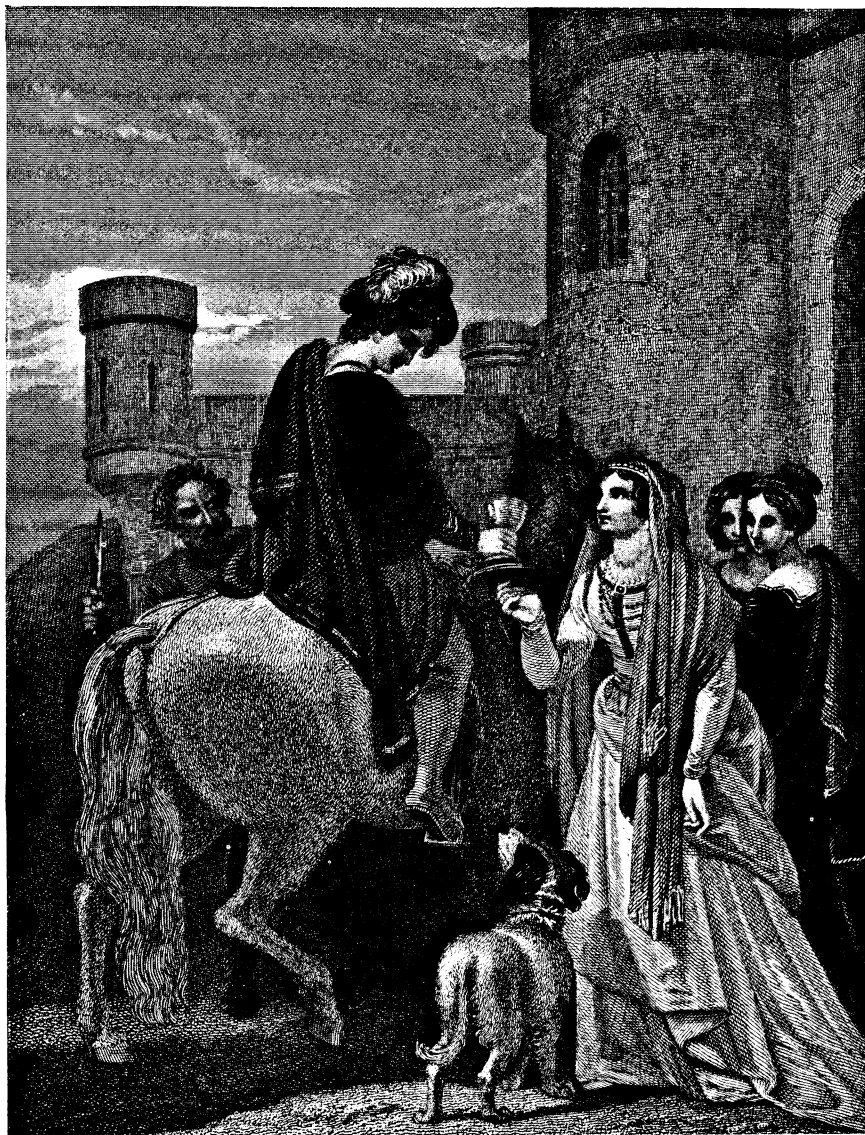


"EDWARD THE MARTYR ANOINTED BY DUNSTAN AT KINGSTON, 975." BY R. CATON WOODVILLE.

The poor health of Edred probably induced him to throw almost monarchical power into Dunstan's hands, and it was the youthful Churchman's genius which lifted the years of this king's reign above the furrows of petty strife, for when Edred died,

the English and the Danes were in amity, the last flourishes of local insubordination in Northumbria, revived since Athelstan's ascendancy, having been finally suppressed.

Edred was followed on the throne by his brother's son, Edwy, surnamed "the Fair,"

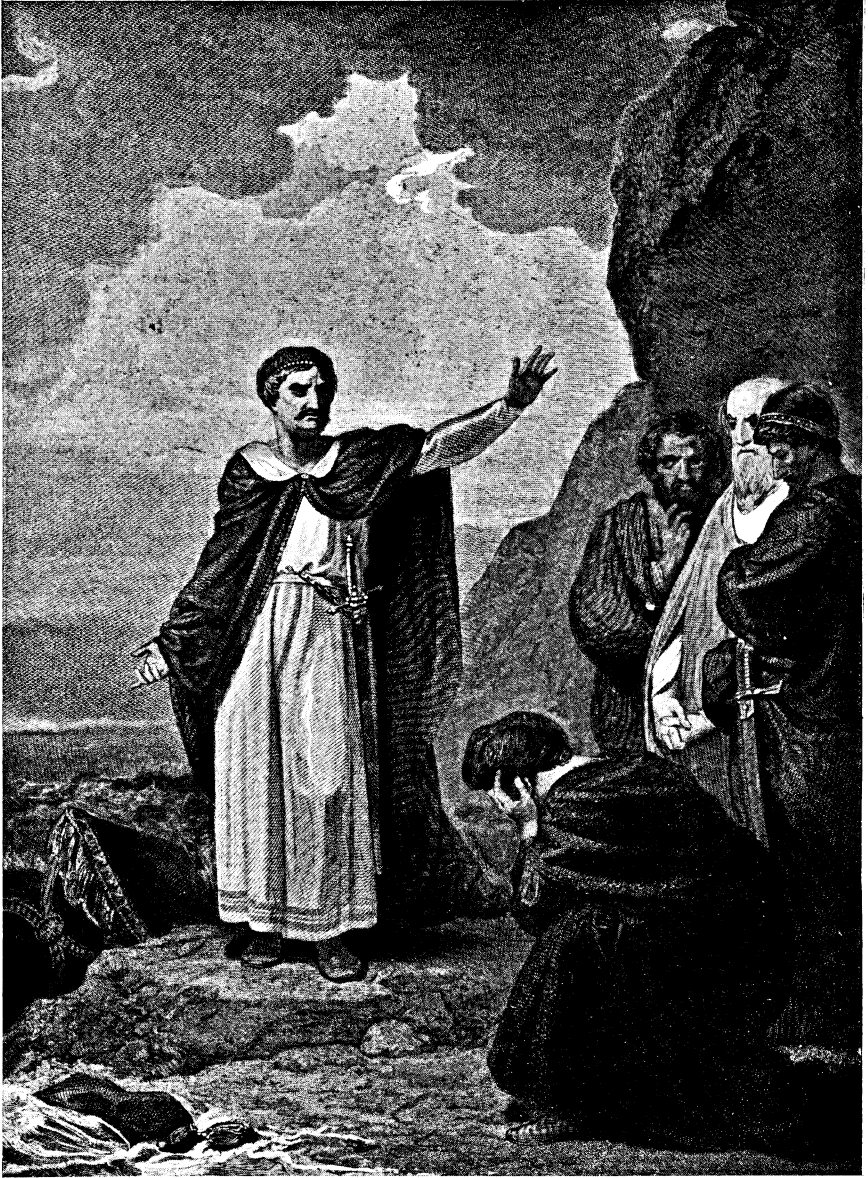


"EDWARD THE MARTYR AND THE TREACHERY OF ELFRIDA, 979." BY R. SMIRKE, R.A.

then a lad, whose age is variously given as fifteen and eighteen. It is likely that Dunstan, the trusted adviser of the late monarch, offended the boy king by some act of presumed authority which the latter considered derogatory to his newly acquired regal position. Certainly the young monarch from the first took sides against him, favouring the claims of the secular clergy in the matter of clerical celibacy, which Dunstan had greatly at heart. But scanty details have come to us of the dramatic

scene which followed Edwy's coronation, when the Witan, incensed at the boy's withdrawal from the banquet which followed his coronation, gave to Dunstan, through the Danish Archbishop of Canterbury, Odo, instructions to bring him back from the society of Ethelgiva and Elgiva, mother and daughter, ladies of the Court related to the royal line—probably the young monarch's foster-mother and foster-sister—with whom he had taken refuge from the tedium of the long banquet. Out of this quarrel sprang,

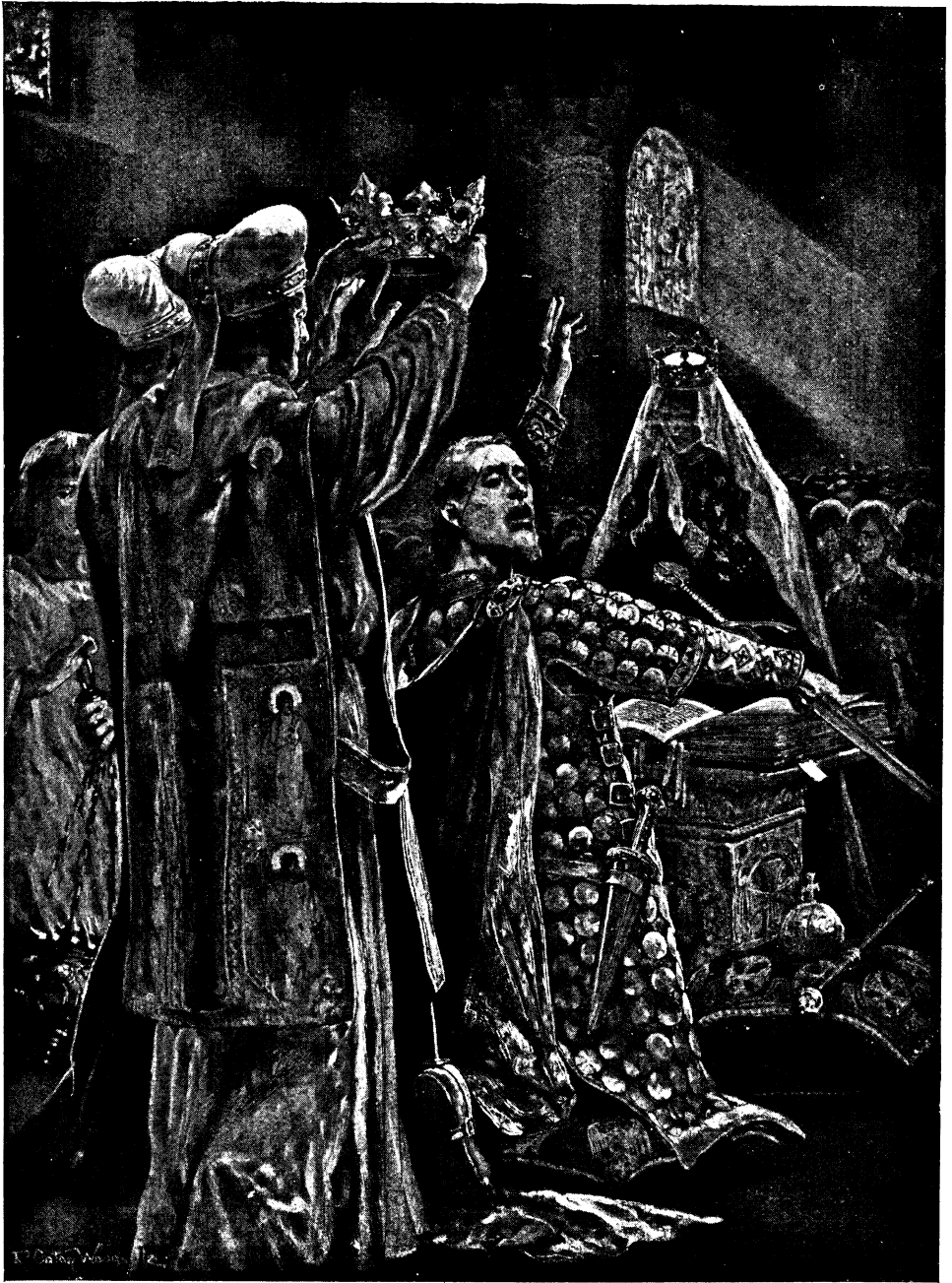




"CANUTE REPROVING HIS COURTIER." BY R. SMIRKE, R.A.

first, Dunstan's banishment and the confiscation of his goods, then schism in the Church; next, King Edwy's forcible separation from his wife (for he had married Elgiva soon after his coronation), on the grounds that they were too near akin; and, lastly, the division of the kingdom in 957, when a bloodless revolt placed Edgar, Edwy's younger brother, a boy of thirteen, as king over all the land with the exception of Wessex.

Edwy had in his nature none of that active heroism which would have enabled him to fight this usurpation successfully. The race of Cerdic was perhaps weakening after the five hundred years for which it had flourished. Certainly we know too little of his character to hazard a guess as to whether he died of wounded spirit or in the field, but he survived the catastrophe of deposition only two years, and Edgar, surnamed "the Pacific," at the age of sixteen, in 959,



"EDWARD THE CONFESSOR CROWNED AT WINCHESTER, 1042." BY R. CATON WOODVILLE.

succeeded to the whole of the Anglo-Saxon dominion.

Edgar's first act was to recall Dunstan and to make him Prime Minister and Archbishop of Canterbury. The reformation of the religious houses and insistence on the celibacy

of the clergy followed as a matter of course. The character of the young king has come down to us as ambiguous and mixed; but his policy, which was that of Dunstan, breathes a large and liberal spirit. "*Suavem memoriam sui reliquit*," writes of him Burton



EDWARD THE CONFESSOR.

*From a thirteenth-century MS., photographed by M. Leon.*

of "Melancholy" fame, and yet Edgar lives in history through an instance of arrogant dealing with his king-vassals. In 975 he went to Chester, "and summoning to his Court there all the kings that held of him," writes Milton, in describing the scene, "took homage of them; their names are Kened, King of Scots, Malcolm of Cumberland, Maccuse of the Isles, five of Wales, Daswil, Huwal, Griffith, Jacob, Judethil. These he had in such awe, that going one day into a galley, he caused them to take each man his oar, and row him down the River Dee, while he himself sat at the stern : which might be done in merriment, easily obeyed ; if with a serious brow, discovered rather vainglory and insulting haughtiness than moderation of mind."

Edgar married twice. His first wife, Etheffled the Fair, of humble birth, was the mother of the young Edward known in later times as "the Martyr." His second wife, Elfrida, the widow of an Ealdorman of East Anglia, was a woman whose name has come down to history with the word "unscrupulous" attached to it. Edgar died in 975, and the young Edward, then thirteen, was placed by Dunstan and his party on the throne. Four years of internal struggles by the secular clergy and the feudal lords of the South of England against the monks and the yeomen of the North then ensued. The quarrel between the two sections grew vehement and became geographical. Mercia rejected monkish rule, East Anglia supported it. Governors of provinces were

bribed by Churchmen in return for their protection ; and an old historian, Rumes, gives the sufferings of the monks as inexpressible. The twice-widowed Elfrida stirred the strife to seething-point. Dunstan's position grew insecure ; then, although there are now no contemporary histories existing to verify it, an incident, which seems to have been looked upon at the time as a miracle, occurred at an assembly of the Witan at Calne, which placed Dunstan once more in supremacy. While the senators were agitatedly arguing for and against secular or monkish supremacy, Dunstan's words : "I commit the cause of the Church to the decision of Christ," were immediately followed by the giving way of the floor of the room, with its beams and rafters, and the whole of the assembly, with the exception of Dunstan and his friends, was precipitated into the cellars below. Many were killed and others grievously hurt, and the catastrophe, instead

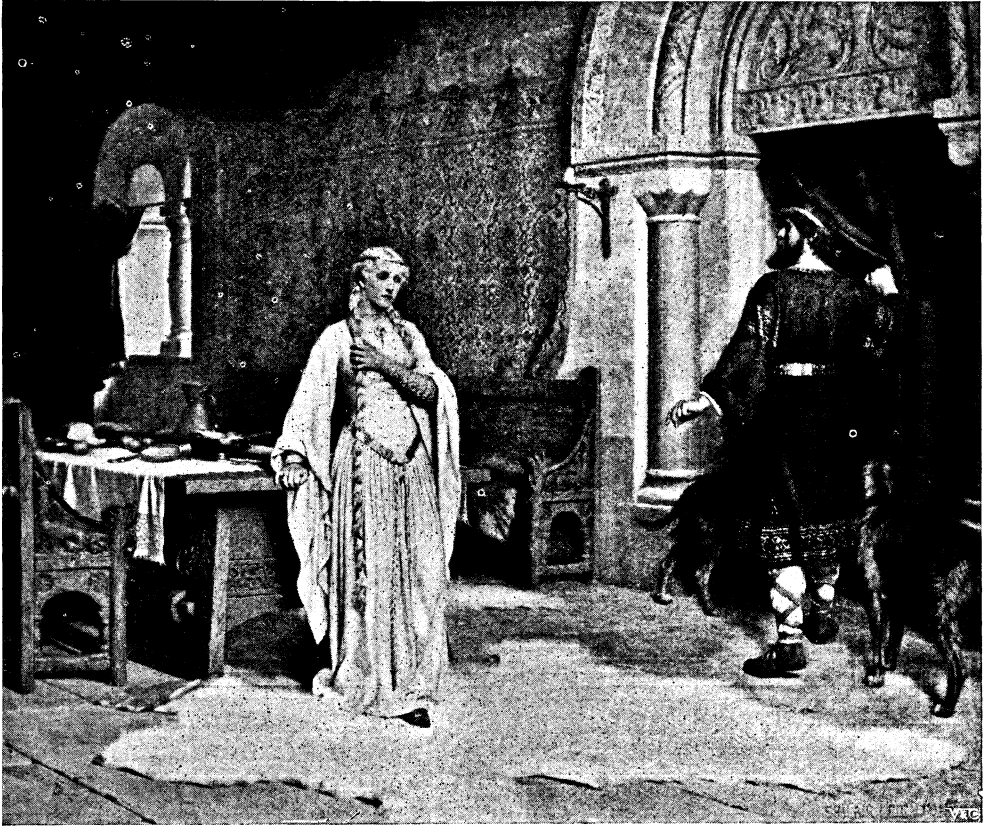


A PORTRAIT OF EDWARD THE CONFESSOR IN MSS. AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

*Photographed by M. Leon.*

of being suspected as prearranged, seems generally to have been accepted as a sign of the righteousness of the monkish cause. "The miracle gave peace to the archbishop, even if it were not supernatural." These words imply that Dunstan was instrumental in the destruction of his enemies; but even the records of our best authorities, such as those of William of Malmesbury, who was born nearly one hundred years later, are but

episode which followed. We are told that, weary one day with the hunt, and separated from his followers, Edward rode to the near Castle of Corfe, decoyed either by the thought of enjoying his step-mother's hospitality, or, as Palgrave says, by "the clever, cankered dwarf of the queen." He was drinking a cup of wine in the saddle, when one of Elfrida's attendants stabbed him in the back. The wounded lad put spur to his



"LADY GODIVA RECEIVING THE HARSH TERMS OF HER HUSBAND, EARL LEOFRIC." BY E. BLAIR LEIGHTON.

*Reproduced from the original in the Leeds Art Gallery, by permission of the Directors.*

as dim tapers in the dark paths of the occasion's understanding.

The subjection of the king's will to the prelate's would have given the Churchman supreme power in the land but for the machinations of Elfrida, the queen dowager, who plotted to dethrone her step-son in favour of her own son, Ethelred. The action of the unsuspecting seventeen-year-old monarch facilitated the carrying out of her design, and there is a curious unanimity amongst historians in their accounts of the tragic

horse, but, becoming faint from loss of blood, he fell, and, one foot remaining in the stirrup, was dragged until he died.

Ethelred, his half-brother, reigned in his stead, and thirty-seven disastrous years, from 979 to 1016, followed. Dunstan crowned the ten-year-old child at Kingston in 979, and the ominous nickname of "Unready," that is, "resourceless," without "rede" or good counsel, appears from then to have attached itself to the boy. With Ethelred's reign there commenced the reappearance of

those enemies, the Danes, whom the courage and wisdom of his forebears had either subdued to peace within the land or banished from it. Patriotism prevailed, and those who had been contented to live in amity with the Saxons rose against their neighbours at the sight of the "raven" standard of their own Vikings.

Ethelred's was a reign of decadence, a reign of revolt, in which the bright hope of peace was dimmed. Dunstan, an old man when he crowned the lad, died ten years later, leaving inscribed, if not upon his tomb, upon the consciousness of his countrymen, an epitaph to the effect that he was a

interests of the educational influence of the Church, and not merely as a fanatical enthusiast for the monastic system. Even in his own See he continued the order of secular clergy in addition to the monastic priesthood.

In the years immediately following Dunstan's death, we find the Witan for the first time agreeing to the payment of that colossal tax, called Danegeld, which was to ruin the people and place England at the mercy of the victorious Norsemen. Ten thousand pounds was the amount of the sum first raised ; but nations, like Nature, are tenacious of precedents when once they are established, and three years after the payment of ten



"MACBETH GIVING INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE MURDER OF BANQUO." BY GEORGE CATTERMOLE.

strenuous Churchman, even if he busied himself overmuch with secular affairs ; that he was zealous in the cause of what he considered right, without respect of persons. He was, indeed, the first of that long line of ecclesiastical statesmen who, so long as learning was confined to the clergy, did much for the greatness of England. Many of the facts of his life were probably much distorted by his monkish biographers, and early historians were led into exaggerating his insistence on celibacy among the clergy. The modern opinion is that Dunstan saw the necessity for altogether reforming a degenerate secular clergy, but that he did so in the

thousand pounds to the Norsemen, Sweyn, King of Denmark, and Analf, King of Norway, came up the Thames with ninety-four galleys, and although they were gallantly resisted by the Londoners, so wasted the surrounding country with fire and sword, that Ethelred was glad to buy them off at the increased price of sixteen thousand pounds.

Then there was promise of peace, not kept, however, for South Wales, Cornwall, Devonshire, Hampshire, Dorsetshire, the Isle of Wight, and Kent, became subject, each in turn, to Danish depredation, for which the king, in retaliation, ravaged Cumberland, where those of the Danes who





"MACBETH'S BANQUET." BY D. MACLISE, R.A.



were as yet peacefully inclined were established, here "imitating his enemies in spoiling and unpeopling." The difficulties of Ethelred were, however, not confined to northern incursions, for hostilities prevailed between him and Richard II., the good Duke of Normandy; but these were terminated by the mediation of the Pope, who led Ethelred, in the year 1002, to ask the Duke for his sister Emma in marriage. "And here," says Freeman, "was the beginning of the cause which led to the Norman Conquest, for Emma brought with her Norman followers, some of whom were entrusted with commands in England. This kindred between the two families led to increased intercourse between Normandy and England, to the settlement of Normans in England, to Norman interference in English affairs, and ultimately to the claims of Duke William."

This alliance was not made before a third tribute, enhanced now to twenty-four thousand pounds, had been exacted by the Danes from the English monarch.

Then, perhaps because he thought that marriage with the daughter of the Norman house had strengthened his hand, Ethelred, beyond need of either policy or mercy, committed an act which has only once been equalled in history. As the French Catholics rose on the eve of St. Bartholomew and murdered their Protestant fellow-countrymen, so, on St. Brice's Day, did the Saxons rise up and murder the Danish settlers who were living in their midst. Amongst those who perished was the sister of the Danish King, Sweyn, who, the following year, 1003, invaded England, landing at Exeter, and marked his path through the country by mounds of dead men and devastated towns.

The massacre of the Danes took place in 1002, and for eleven years onward Sweyn

harried the Saxons, exacting heavier and heavier tribute for temporary cessation of hostilities. At the expiration of that time, in 1013, Ethelred fled with Emma, his queen, his two sons, and such treasure as he could compass, to Normandy, throwing himself upon the generosity of his brother-in-law, and the English nobles found no other resource than to swear allegiance and submit themselves to Sweyn. Thus the pendulum of Saxon greatness, at its height under Alfred and Athelstan, touched its lowest level under Ethelred.

Sweyn lived but a few months after he was declared king, and the southern part of the kingdom, acquiescing in the Witan's decision to restore the line of Cerdic, provided its representative governed them

better than he did before, invited Ethelred to return from Normandy. But the astute Canute, son of Sweyn, secured the sympathies and support of all beyond Watling Street. Again the land was plunged into the horrors of what may be called civil



THE DEATH OF EDWARD THE CONFESSOR.

*Photographed by M. Leon from a thirteenth-century MS.*

war, so long had the Northmen been resident in the Danelagh, during which Canute showed himself to be possessed of that genius which is, for kings, most aptly demonstrated through good fortune. England had practically submitted to Canute, when, in 1016, Ethelred died; and when his son, Edmund Ironsides, succeeded, it was to find the people of London alone loyal to the Cerdic line. His seven months' reign was ended by his murder.

Canute thus became omnipotent. His first act was to divide England into four earldoms, thus solidifying feudalism. Edric Streona he retained as ruler of Mercia; Eric, a Norwegian prince and a great friend of his, he placed over Northumbria; Thurkill, the Dane, over East Anglia; and only Wessex did he retain for himself. Then,

although he was but twenty years old in this year of his accession, he married Emma, the widow of Ethelred, known as "The Gem of Normandy," who must have been considerably his senior, since it was fifteen years earlier that she had married the Saxon king. Canute's first political act after his marriage was to banish Edmund Ironsides' two sons—Edward and Edmund—to Sweden, the king of which country had them conveyed to Hungary, where one died and the other, known as Edward the Outlaw, in course of time became progenitor of the Edgar Atheling who, after the battle of Hastings, was chosen king by the Witan. The other sons of Ethelred, Edward and Alfred, and Godiva, his daughter and Emma's, were still, at the time of the

Emperor Conrad, that he was frequently absent in his kingdom of Denmark, to which he had succeeded on the death of his brother Harold, and that it was during his absence there, in 1020, that Godwin, whom he had made Earl of Wessex, and who had married his cousin of the genealogy of Danish kings, first made his appearance as a power in England. Canute annexed Norway, as he had annexed Denmark, to the English Crown, and, in addition to his military operations in Scandinavia, he subjugated Scotland, and Malcolm, King of Scots, to whom he married his sister, did homage for that country as an English earldom. Canute died in 1035, at the age of thirty-eight, and on his death his dominions were divided between his three sons, Sweyn, Harold Harefoot, and



THE BAYEUX TAPESTRY: THE BODY OF EDWARD THE CONFESSOR BEING CARRIED TO THE TOMB IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

latter's marriage to Canute, in charge of her brother of Normandy, and it was that Edward who eventually succeeded to the throne under the title of Edward the Confessor.

Canute, although he almost immediately violated his treaty of amity which had partitioned the kingdom into four, and seized the whole, was a man whose character breathes an air of grandeur, if barbaric grandeur. We see him at his ease, simple and unconcerned, in the one intimate scene which historians unveil to our eyes, when he humbled the arrogance of his courtiers by the demonstration of even kingly impotence. We know that he was a man of culture and a man of travel, that he made a pilgrimage to Rome and was present at the coronation of the

Hardicanute, the last only being Emma's son.

Hardicanute, at the time of Canute's death, was already in possession of the kingdom of Denmark. Sweyn immediately took possession of Norway. England, however, was divided in her allegiance, the Danes declaring in favour of Harold Harefoot, the English in favour of Hardicanute. Civil war was avoided by a division of rule. Queen Emma and the powerful Earl Godwin ruled the west and south for Hardicanute in his absence, and Harold Harefoot ruled his northern provinces from London. Harold appears, probably because Hardicanute's absence gave Emma and Godwin but little actual power, to have had very little difficulty in dispossessing the regents of Winchester, which he did two

years after his accession, forcing Emma to take refuge with her great-nephew, the child William, then lately raised to the throne of Normandy. Three years later Harold died, and then the whole of England was unanimous in its acclamation of Hardicanute; but within the years of Harold Harefoot's reign, his subsidiary kingdom of Scotland was the scene of the drama of Duncan and Macbeth, the Thane of Glamis, which Shakespeare has vitalised for all time.

Hardicanute's first act, on his accession in 1040, was to send to Normandy for his half-brother, Edward. "Towards his half-brethren he showed himself always tenderly affection'd; as now towards Edward, who came to him out of Normandy, and with unfeigned gladness receiv'd, remain'd safely and honourably at his Court." Thus was the way prepared for re-establishment of the Saxon line of Cerdic, for Hardicanute's reign lasted less than two years, since he, a great lover of good cheer, "sound and healthful to sight," fell speechless at a banquet, and, as an old chronicler says, "so dying, was buried at Winchester."

With the accession of Edward, known as the Confessor, the Normans came into power, and we at once get the clash of conflicting interests. Godwin placed Edward upon the throne; yet no sooner was he upon it than he was for ever siding with those who plotted against Godwin and the English party. Three important bishoprics and many small preferments were immediately given to foreigners, and a "mickle company" of these soon attained other offices of rank and power.

From now we see the old order changing—French manners, French language, and French legal forms coming into use. Then came protests on the part of Earl Godwin, to whose daughter, Edith, Edward had for some years been married, and to reduce Earl Godwin to reason, Edward called upon his good lords, Siward of Northumbria and Leofric of Mercia, married to Godiva, of Coventry fame, whose well-known act of riding "clothed on with chastity" through its streets freed its people from their cruel taxes. These events occurred in 1051, and Godwin fled the country, leaving an almost kingly power, which he had achieved in Kent, Sussex, and Wessex, and through his sons in Oxford, Gloucester, Hereford, Somersetshire, Berkshire, Essex, East Anglia, Huntingdon, and Cambridge; whereupon the king, for the first time a really reigning monarch, showed more and more favour to the Normans, and

William, Duke of Normandy, a man of two or three-and-twenty, visited England.

The king, perhaps, during this visit, made some promise, since he had no heir and was turned fifty years of age, to speak to the Witan on behalf of William's being appointed his successor. He was, in spite of the fact that kingship was an office, free to make this promise, which meant no more, perhaps, than an act on his part of indecision or of good will.

With William's departure the intention was probably forgotten, for the next year we find Edward under the English influence, and permitting of the return from exile of Godwin and his family. Discontent among the English at the favour extended to the Norman, and the formidable nature of Godwin's many allies, made this advisable; and now Edward, making a virtue of necessity, permitted Godwin to purge himself before him and the Assembly of his Council of the charge of treason, and the great earl and his six sons—Harold, Sweyn, Wulnoth, Tostig, Gurth, and Leofwine—were accepted in full friendship, estates and honours being restored to them, and now the Normans, in their turn, were outlawed.

Godwin had scarcely achieved restoration to royal favour when, as though to prove the mutability of earthly greatness, he died, and Harold, his son, succeeded to his title as Earl of Wessex and that colossal wealth of possessions which is clearly indicated in William's Domesday Book.

The choice of a successor appears to have been still a source of anxiety to Edward, and he recalled Edward the Outlaw, the son of Edmund Ironsides, from the Court of Hungary, who reached his Court in 1057, but died soon afterwards. Then the king, seeing in Edgar Atheling a youth too feeble to retain the throne, even should he ascend it, let his thoughts veer towards Harold as his successor. For that Harold was so appointed by Edward, even although it was the Witan's choice that alone made kingship, is definitely asserted by many of the Saxon chroniclers, and in these last years of the king's reign it is Harold rather than Edward who is the prominent figure.

Edward the Confessor died in 1066, and was buried in the Abbey of Westminster, which he had built, or "re-edified" to St. Peter, endowing the same with large privileges and revenues, as price of the Pope's absolution of a vow, made in his youth, to take a journey to Rome if God should vouchsafe him to reign in England.

# A RELIEF EXPEDITION.

By CLOTILDE GRAVES.



WHEN intelligence of the alarming illness of Mr. Jupp, late of Arabella Terrace, Queen's Crescent, Kentish Town, was imparted to the children of his first wife, per medium of a soiled and wilted postcard in the handwriting of his second—a missive so economically directed that it had been delivered at and rejected as "Not known" from eleven different addresses in the metropolitan suburbs—a general council or indaba was held. This, as the writer of the postcard had enjoined upon the Jupps complete abstention from the indulgence of any dutiful impulse to seek the society of the sufferer, naturally ended in the despatch of a relief expedition of one to the minute country farm in the remote country district to which Mr. Jupp, impelled by the yearning to taste fresh air and home-grown cabbages, had betaken himself three years previously, with his new wife, his youngest son Alfred, and his old house-dog Rover, whose bark had been impaired by the passage of time, but whose bite was nearly as good as ever.

The Relief Expedition consisted of the exile's eldest son, Mr. William Jupp, ex-mariner, who, in default of a professional outlet for his obvious talents, had been for some time actively engaged in swelling the ranks of the unemployed.

A bottle of whisky, warranted genuine Scotch, was purchased for two and elevenpence at "The Bunch of Grapes" by the invalid's affectionate daughter Bessie, and a bundle of twelve cigars, from the emporium of the Zermuda Company next door, warranted to give especial satisfaction for a shilling, formed the dutiful contribution of his second son Joe. As the entire pecuniary resources of Mr. William Jupp's pockets were found, upon family examination, to consist of a French halfpenny, the amount of his railway fare, with an additional sixpence for refreshments, was contributed with some reluctance by Miss Lizzie Jupp.

"Copecut Elm Farm, Hoppen Frogmarsh, near Crawlingford, Berks, that's the full address," she said, as with cold distrust she accompanied the Expedition to the railway station, "and don't you forget it. What took father such a ways off is more than I ever could understand, unless 'e wanted to 'ide from 'is own flesh and blood!" she added, with unconsciously perfect grasp of the paternal motive. "I've only took a single ticket to Crawlingford," she continued acidly, "becos if father is glad of your com'ny, he'll want you to stop over the week, and if 'e ain't, 'e'll pay the 'ome fare to be rid of you. So good-bye, and mind you don't come 'ome without knowin' 'ow pore father 'as made out 'is will."

It was the morning of a bitter January day that saw the Expedition set out from Paddington. The weather was quite seasonable, little pieces of damp snow flew into the carriage whenever the windows of the third-class smoker were lowered, or the doors opened for the exit of a passenger. The pollard poplars of the Thames Valley loomed ghostly through a frosty fog, the blue-nosed porters beat their chests as though in agonies of operatic remorse, and the bottle of whisky carried in the inside pocket of Mr. William Jupp's venerable pilot jacket began to burn there. As the venerable clasp-knife carried by the Expedition contained a corkscrew, it was not long before the spirits in the bottle had evaporated to the last drop, and those of Mr. William Jupp had been elevated to the highest pitch. He lighted cigar after cigar from a rapidly shrinking bundle with a misty conviction that errands of mercy brought their own reward, and that so far the Expedition had been decidedly a success.

Ere long, quitting the shelter of the third-class smoker for the smallest station he had ever seen, announced in Brobdignagian letters to be Crawlingford, Mr. William Jupp negotiated the descent of a steep flight of asphalted stairs in a series of alarming slides and flounders, and had emerged into a landscape unmarked by any more salient features than hedges, ditches, pollard trees and snow, before he realised that he had not the faintest

recollection of the address at which presumably reclined a parent in extremity.

Two hours of heavy walking but confirmed him in the conviction that the Expedition was lost, and passing between a straggling double row of very small cottages without barns or hayricks, and coming, at the end of what was announced per finger-post to be the village of Market Rumbling, upon a beer-house, he realised that he must drink or perish, and remembering that the only coin now in his possession was the halfpenny of the French description, acutely regretted the enforced separation from family and friends. Then a happy thought occurred to him. There still remained half-a-dozen cigars, only slightly frayed from pocket friction. Holding three of these between his first and second fingers, in the approved style of a hawker, he entered the tap-room and offered the nicotian delicacies in exchange for the quart of beer for which his being craved.

The landlord scowled.

"No, no," he said hastily, "us don't do that sort o' business 'ere no more. Been cheated already by a sailor-lookin' chap o' your sort. Like enough to you to 'a' been your brother. Brown paper his cigars was, wi' tea-leaves inside, an' but that I 'ad the sense to give my boy here the fust to try, dog sick they'd ha' made me. Wouldn't 'em, Fred?"

The pimply young man the landlord addressed grunted in a surly manner, and went on filling a mineral-water merchant's crate with empty sodas. Rendered desperate by the close vicinity of the beer-pulls, Mr. William Jupp drew the French halfpenny from his pocket.

"I've got a curious coin 'ere," he said with a simple air. "Might be vallyble to anybody what understands such things. If you 'ave a fancy to 'ave it, it's yours for a pint; only say the word."

The landlord said several words and pointed to the door. Mr. Jupp, noting a disposition on the part of the pimply Fred to speed the parting guest, delicately quitted the premises. A thirst raised to frenzy by the sight and odour of the liquid denied by an arid Fate now suggested to the castaway mariner a method by which the thirst that now consumed him might be relieved. It was getting dusk. A small and aggressively scarlet sun was in the act of retiring for the night behind curtains of dun-coloured vapour, the powdery snow creaked under the footsteps of the wayfarer, and a knife-edged eastern breeze sawed aggressively at his tingling ears. People were having tea,

lights began to twinkle in the cottages, the smell of buttered toast was fragrant on the air, and outside the illuminated parlour window of a prosperous-looking cottage dwelling that abutted on the side-walk, Mr. William Jupp halted and struck up a hymn with more strength of lung than accuracy of musical memory, and greater determination to attract attention than to evoke applause.

There was only one Agnostic, only one Socialist, only one Free Thinker, and only one avowed Republican and Anti-Monarchist in the village of Market Rumbling, and he made up for the small numbers of his party by the excessive strength and virulence of his opinions. The waits had waited upon him nightly in Christmas week, only consenting to curtail their programme upon the hasty production of a shot-gun, and the musical efforts of Mr. Jupp now fell like oil upon the still glowing fires of his indignation. Rising from the bed to which, still fully dressed and with his hat and boots on, he was wont to retire when the birds sought their nests, he crept to the lattice, opened it softly, and looked out. His wife, a person of normal habits, was taking tea in the parlour-kitchen below, and to the doomed melodist outside its muslin-blinded window her warning gestures seemed to betoken admiration.

"Wants me to tip 'er another verse," soliloquised Mr. Jupp, who had filled up gaps in the first with fragments of a strictly secular nature. "If she don't stand tuppence after this, it'll be sheer robbery." He pressed his nose against the frosty pane and sang until the glass was clouded with his respiration and the inner hedge of geraniums fairly vibrated.

Then the contents of a water-pail of capacious size descended impetuously from above, the lattice closed smartly, and Mr. Jupp, with chattering teeth and streaming garments, retired to a safe distance from the cottage, from which he swore at the occupant of its upper chamber, until loss of voice caused him to desist.

"Call yourself a Christian, do you, you 'eathen swine!" he shouted, impotently shaking his dripping fist at the imperturbable upper lattice.

"No, I don't!" said the Agnostic cottager, suddenly putting out a bushy-bearded head of unwashed complexion, adorned by a crushed felt hat firmly tied down with a blue cotton handkerchief. "Nothing o' the kind. You come singin' hymns under my winder again, and I'll show you what I am, with a cartridge o' small shot! It was the organist

set you on, or the schoolmaster. Deny it and you're a liar!"

"I'm a liar, then," said the discontented Mr. Jupp, writhing as small rivulets of chilly water trickled from his sleeves into his pockets and meandered down his spine, to find refuge in his socks.

"I believe you!" said the Agnostic cottager, and slammed the window.

The milk of human kindness was now completely curdled in the bosom of Mr. Jupp. His belief in the virtue of his fellow-creatures, his faith in the soundness of his own intentions, with the filial devotion that had spurred his footsteps in the supposed direction of the parental bedside, had vanished. So had the last recollected fragment of the elder Jupp's address. He found himself penniless in an unknown and hostile country, and the advisability of taking the next train back to London loomed before him, as largely as the impossibility of doing so without the money for a return ticket.

Under the stress of circumstances his moral character deteriorated rapidly. He resolved to beg the return fare and a trifle over from the next prosperous-looking person he should meet, and if nothing was to be got by begging, of the profitableness of which as a profession he entertained grave doubts, to have recourse to measures of a desperate nature, involving,

if necessary, highway robbery with violence, preferably of the one-sided kind.

It was getting darkish. The last rays of the smoky sunset had vanished, the uncertain glimmering whiteness of the snow seemed to have absorbed whatever light was left. Turning up his wet coat-collar and unconsciously assuming a slouch consistent

with his budding purpose, Mr. William Jupp, in squelching boots, struck out doggedly in search of an opportunity. It approached him presently in the shape of a burly man, who had his head enveloped in a fur cap with ear-flaps, and his neck wound into so many folds of a woollen comforter that his nose, which was prominent and of a fiery red, and a bush of iron-grey whisker on either side of a conjectural countenance, alone remained exposed to the weather. He wore a shaggy greatcoat, and drove with the aid of a switch an animal whose grunt, despite the dark, advertised it as the inhabitant of a pigsty.



"She accompanied the Expedition to the railway station."

Imparting to his naturally surly tones something of the oiliness cultivated by the habitual mendicant, Mr. William Jupp made up to the driver of the hog, wished him the compliments of the season, and solicited his aid for a fellow-creature in trouble.

"I'm in trouble myself, if it comes to that," said the burly, grey-whiskered driver



of the hog, in husky tones that, filtered through the thicknesses of the muffler that covered his mouth, awakened no slumbering echo in the memory of Mr. William Jupp. "Aven't I got this 'ere hog to drive 'ome a matter of four mile when I'd set my 'art on sellin' 'im along with 'is brother to the butcher at Warming Crossways—what can on'y do with one, along of the influenza 'aving broke out among 'is best customers? 'Aven't I got to keep the beast over Christmas?" the speaker continued garrulously, "by which time, out o' sheer aggravation at Earl Roberts bein' preferred afore 'im, he'll 'ave fretted 'isself thin. Earl Roberts is 'is twin brother; 'is name is Lord Kitchener. Don't pay me no compliments; I didn't baptise neither of them. I took 'em over with a litter o' piglings from the man what I bought my little farm off three year ago, an' a nice cheat 'e was, to do 'im justice. What are you turning back along o' me for? I haven't a penny to give you, I wouldn't give you one if I 'ad it, and I'm not in love with company o' your kind. Why don't you go your own ways and let me go mine?"

"Beg par'n, gentleman, the sound o' your kindly voice, gentleman," persisted Mr. William Jupp, not unsuccessfully sustaining his adopted character of professional mendicant, as he persistently followed in the footsteps of the muffled-up man who drove the hog, "as melted my 'ard 'art and told me that all 'uman beings do not regard the pore as the dirt under their feet. I am a orphan, kind gentleman, without a relation or a friend in the 'ole world, and not a blessed mag but this 'ere halfpenny. It is 'ard on a British sailor what 'as served 'is time——"

"An' deserved what 'e got, I lay!" growled the hog-driver, who would have walked faster if the hog had been agreeable.

"—served 'is time in the Royal Navy, and bin broke down in 'is 'ealth," said Mr. William Jupp, marvelling at his own fluency, "by the bursting of a turrick on a nooly invented submarine. With burning flames around me, gentleman, I clung to my post——"

"You ought to ha' chucked it overboard, an' yourself with it, an' floated ashore that way," objected the man who drove the pig. "I've a son in the seafaring way myself, an' even 'e would 'ave 'ad sense enough for that, I reckon."

"I come ashore at Portsmouth, gentleman, on'y yes'day," pursued Mr. William Jupp, "and 'ave been laying in an 'orspital ever

since at the p'int o' death. Now, discharged an' without a single halfpenny——"

"Why, you showed me one just now," hypercritically objected the driver of the pig.

"Without clo'es to cover me from the crool cold, or boots to protect my pore feet from the stones of the 'ard 'ighway——" pathetically continued Mr. William Jupp.

"Then," said the man, correcting a deviation of the hog with the switch, and quickening his pace in the vain endeavour to outweary the determined victim of an ungrateful country—"then you've stole the decent suit and the good boots what you're a-wearin' now. An' I don't know but what I shouldn't be doing my duty to the neighbour'ood in 'anding you over to the police. Git on, Kitchener!"

Kitchener squealed protestingly at a reminder from the switch, and broke into a trot. So did his owner, so did Mr. William Jupp.

"Beg par'n, gentleman," he recommenced, as they plodded between the thatched houses, whose lighted windows still revealed family parties gathered at the domestic tea-board. "If you'll believe me——"

"Do I look like a fool?" asked the driver of the pig with simple directness.

"It's too dark for me to see your face, gentleman," said Mr. Jupp, with great want of tact.

"And it's too dusk for me to make out yourn clear," said the hog-driver, "but I can guess your lay without that. You've bin sunk in a submarine or blown up in a powder magazine, or discharged from the Army, after being wounded on the battle-field, or you've been buried in a coal-mine, or chopped up in a sausage factory. Say one, say all; I don't contradict you. But whatever tale you're ready to pitch, it all comes to the same thing, an' that's money out of my pocket."

So completely had the wind been taken out of Mr. Jupp's sails by this anticipation of his confidence, that he perforce was silent as he racked his invention for something not mentioned by the driver of the hog. Keeping pace with him during the throes of composition, for he showed no disposition to stop—

"I 'ave a aged father, kind gentleman," he began at length, "which is now lying at 'is last garsp."

"Aye, aye," said the hog-driver, plodding on. "What's 'e garsping about? The disgrace of 'aving a cadger for a son?"

"No, gentleman," replied Mr. William Jupp, drawing on facts. "Pewmonia is what's the matter with 'im. Got along of a chill," he added hastily.

"Pewmonia is on'y the crackjaw name the doctors give it," said the shaggy man, as he

don't see why you're worriting me. Go an' see after him; that'll give you something to do."

"I should on'y be too thankful, gentleman, if I could," said Mr. William Jupp, in a whining tone which did credit to his powers of mimicry. "But 'e lives in London, and unless I can git the railway fare to take me there from some kind benefactor, pore father may go off without 'is last wish being granted."

"What is 'is last wish?" asked the shaggily coated man curiously.

"To see my face agin before 'e dies, gentleman," said Mr. William Jupp dramatically.

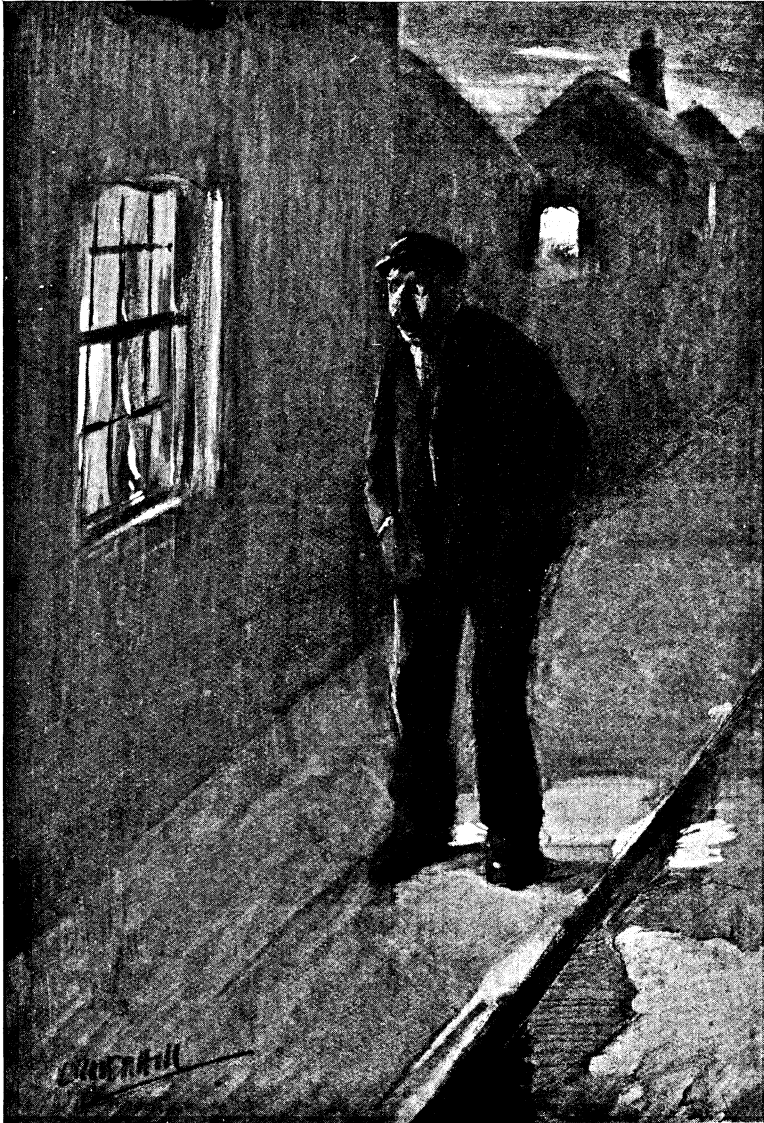
"I wonder at 'is taste," commented the surly pig-driver, "if it matches your voice in any way. Well, you won't git your fare from me. If it was your mother, now, I might say different."

"But it is me mother, gentleman," said Mr. Jupp with cheerful alacrity. "When I said father, it was her I was meaning all the time. I'm 'er eldest, gentleman, an' the pride of 'er loving 'art."

"It don't take much to make 'er proud, I reckon," commented the fastidious driver of

the pig. "No, I've got nothing for you. A wife or a child, an' the case might 'ave tempted me to relieve you. I don't say it would, but it might."

"Bless you, kind gentleman, for those words," said the pliable Mr. Jupp rapturously.



"William Jupp halted and struck up a hymn."

plodded sturdily ahead of Mr. Jupp. "A shortness of breath, that's what it really is. As for chill, why, I had it myself on'y two months back, and I never was warmer in my life. Couldn't 'ardly bear the bed-clothes on. If you're so anxious about your father, I

"My pore wife and two dear children are laying at death's door in the very same place where mother is. All struck down at once, gentleman, by the same crool complaint."

"What did you call the name of it?" interrupted the man who drove the hog.

"Spiral meningaiters," said Mr. William Jupp, almost awed by the fecundity of his own invention.

"It's like the pride and wastefulness o' the idle pore to git themselves laid up with expensive complaints like that," said the shaggy man judicially, "and what I say is, it didn't ought to be encouraged. I'm sorry for you as a orphan, and a son, and a husband, and a father, but I should be going agin my own interests as a ratepayer if I give you what you've asked for, or half, or even a quarter of it. I should be doing you no good if I give you as much as a penny, and therefore I won't give you one. I——"

The pig, the man who drove it, and Mr. William Jupp had left the village with its single lamp-post behind them, and were now travelling between high quickset hedges over a road that would have been entirely dark but for the glimmering whiteness of the snow.

A more ideal scene for a robbery upon the person of an unsympathetic middle-aged man with, presumably, the price of a bacon-hog in his trousers' pocket could hardly have been conceived. A frosty wind, acting as accomplice, blew the ends of the woollen muffler back over either shoulder of the driver of the pig. Mr. William Jupp had only to grasp them in either hand, and pull them violently apart, to interfere, in the profitable sense, with the respiration of the wearer. With his heart bounding in his throat, he did so.

"Ug-g'grr'h!" said the victim, lapsing heavily against Mr. Jupp, with a strangled crow of so suggestive a nature that the blood of his assailant froze in horror. "Leggo, you scoun—— Ug-g'grr'h!"

"I will when I get the price of that hog you've sold," said Mr. William Jupp, staggering under the weight of the sufferer. "I don't want to shed your blood, but I'm a desperate man, an' you'd better 'and over." He slightly slackened the woollen comforter. "Do you 'ear?"

"If I must, I must," said the victim hoarsely. "You've near scragged me as it is. I've two breast-pockets in this overcoat, an' the gold's in one of 'em, an' a fi'p'note in the other. Put your 'ands over my

shoulders, feel in both pockets, an' what you find, take."

Unable to repress a smile of triumph at the easy and rapid solution of an overwhelming financial difficulty, Mr. William Jupp let go the ends of the temporary woollen halter and obeyed. Instantly his wrists were seized in a rough and vice-like grip, and bending forward in spite of kicks and struggles, until the boots of his captive were raised several inches off the ground, the elderly man resumed his interrupted pilgrimage.

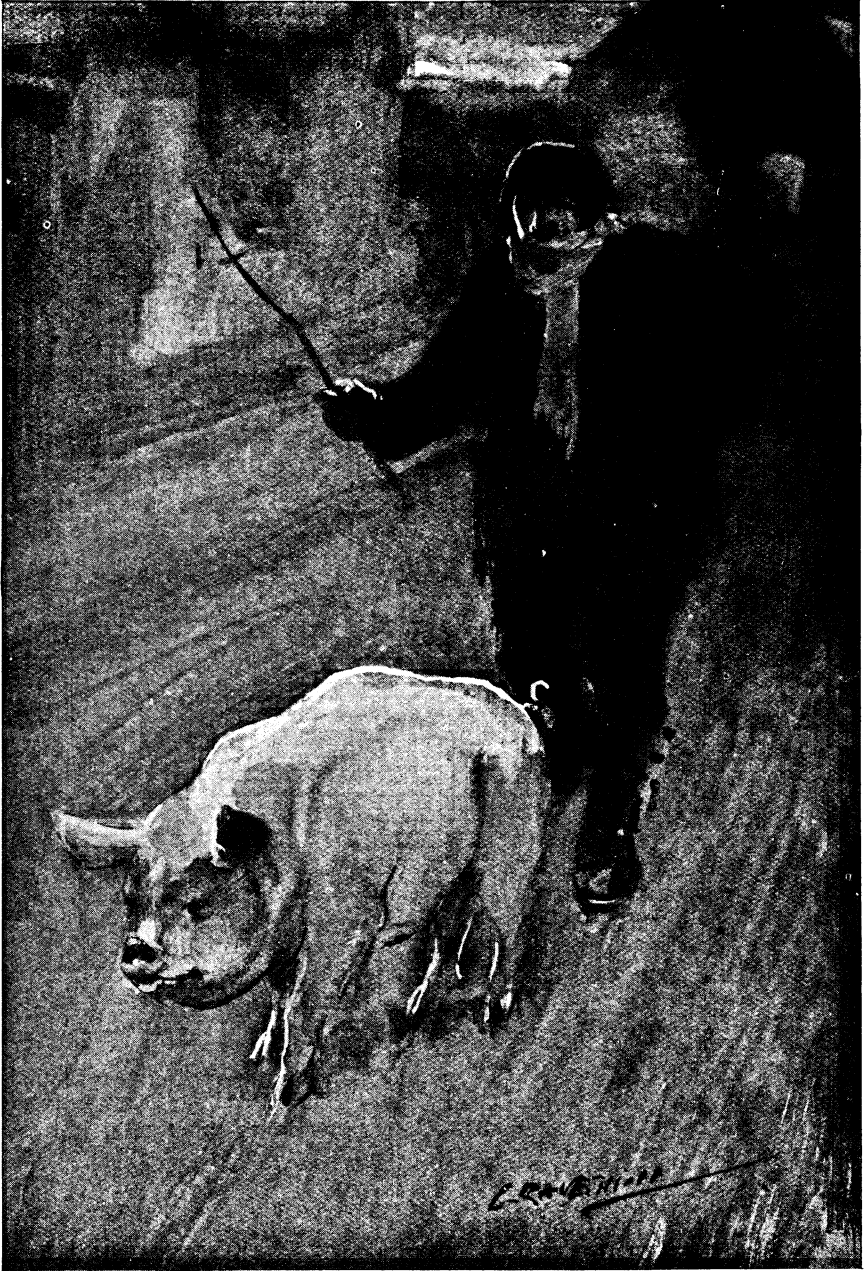
"Leggo!" said Mr. William Jupp angrily. Several attempts at kicking the calves of his captor's legs had failed, as had an effort to bite the back of his neck. With his mouth full of imitation fur cap and woollen comforter, he mumbled: "Can't you take a joke?"

"I've took a 'ighway robber," said the elderly man, as he doggedly progressed after the fashion of a short coal-heaver carrying a tall sack of coals. "And I'm going to keep 'im—leastways, till I've 'anded 'im over to the proper authorities. Then I shall go after my hog, an' if any 'arm 'as come to 'im, it'll be the worse for you." He gave a hitch to his burden and stepped out more rapidly.

"You're not a young man," argued Mr. Jupp considerably, "an', strong as you think yourself, you may be doin' yourself a injury. Why, you're panting like a steam-engine this moment. Suppose you was to fall down dead in the road. What should I feel like. Whatever you may think, I 'ave a 'art——"

"An uncommon small one it must be," said the elderly man grimly, as he paused for breath and then moved resolutely on again. "Don't you strain it on my account. We shall git to the police-station in another minnte or so, as it is, and if it was a hour's journey off, I'd take you there, as sure as my name is William Jupp. What did you say?"

As a matter of fact, Mr. William Jupp junior had uttered a hollow groan. That a shaggy man encountered by a wayfarer after dusk upon an unknown road should prove to be the father of the encounterer, may be regarded as a curious coincidence. Taking it into consideration that the child should have, previously to recognition, attempted to rob the parent, invests the coincidence with the buskins of tragedy. But that the son of the father thus outraged should have, only that morning, started upon a mission of filial duty to the sick-bed of his



"He drove an animal whose grunt advertised it as the inhabitant of a pigsty."

progenitor, throws over the occurrence a glamour of weirdness and mystery highly attractive to students of the occult. Like all men who go down to the sea in ships, as foremast hands, Mr. Jupp junior believed in ghosts. There had been a ghost on board his last ship, a phantom endued with

materialistic powers so sufficient for the ejection of a slumbering forecastle hand from the bunk originally occupied by the ghost when it was not one, that the sleeping-place could only be occupied by a brawny six-foot-high mariner named Bob Hicks, who found all the other bunks too short for

the proper accommodation of his legs. And now the sudden conviction that the ghost of Mr. William Jupp senior, suddenly deceased, had his living descendant in its clutches, caused goose-flesh to develop all over the body of Mr. William Jupp junior and made his hair bristle underneath his cap. That the hog was the ghost of a hog seemed likely to faculties jumbled by previous libations of whisky, by over-excitement, exhaustion consequent on unaccustomed exertion, and the peculiar method of transit by which he was being conveyed—whither?

Upon the weltering confusion of his mind broke a hail from the middle road ahead.

"Jupp?" bellowed a large voice angrily, "is that you?"

"It is!" shouted the supposed ghost of Mr. Jupp senior, of whose fleshly reality his elder son began to be now convinced.

"It's too dark to see you," shouted the man of the bellow, "but I guessed who it must be comin' along. You went up the road while back wi' a couple of hogs, an' there's one in the station garden now, rootin' up Constabulary cabbages."

"Keep 'im till I come, Constable 'Opkins, will you?" shouted the elder Mr. Jupp cheerfully. "I'm bringin' something in your line, which accounts for my being a bit be'ind."

"A drunken tramp?" indifferently queried the constable, who now loomed out of the shadows ahead, leaning over a low gate in some whitish palings by the roadside and toying with a bullseye lantern.

"A 'ighway prig," panted the elder Jupp, as with a steaming forehead he stopped at the police-station gate and submitted his captive to the professional observation of the constable. "Tried to scrag me as cool as you please, just outside the village, which he'd allowed me through, pitchin' a tale as full o' lies as a Christmas puddin' is o' plums. And he'd have done it, too, he would, if I 'adn't bin too quick an' sharp for 'im."

"Let's look at 'im," said the constable, bending over the gate and irradiating with a flood of blinding yellow light, smelling strongly of warm tin and hot oil, the reluctant features of Mr. Jupp junior. "Ugly-lookin' customer, too," he commented. "Well, bring 'im in, since you've brought 'im. I'll hold open the gate. 'Ere! Dawlish!" he shouted, and a brilliant oblong patch of lamplight appeared in the dark part of the cottage police-station, throwing into vivid relief the form of a younger constable. "We've another candidit for inside accommodation—a 'ighway robber took in the act. Look

lively, will you?" he added, and as Mr. Jupp senior laboriously conveyed his speechless incubus up the slippery garden path and over the whitewashed threshold of the police-station, Constable Hopkins bolted the outer door behind him, and taking Mr. William Jupp by the collar, strongly facilitated the clattering descent of his boots upon passage bricks. "Come in 'ere," he then directed, and opening the door of a whitewashed kitchen sitting-room, turned in his charge, while Mr. Jupp the elder, straightening his back with difficulty, followed upon his heels.

The apartment in which the Expedition reluctantly found itself was furnished with simple economy, in addition to a varnished office desk, upon which a ledger reposed in the company of a pewter inkpot, containing three Windsor chairs, a square table covered with American cloth, and materials for a homely tea. The surprise of the elder constable was very great when, upon striding to the desk, opening the ledger, dipping the pen in the ink, and turning round to bid the captor of the highway robber go ahead with the charge, he beheld him seated stiffly in a Windsor chair with fixed and bolting eyes and open mouth, staring blandly at the prisoner, while the zealous younger constable poured milk upon his head with a confused mental analogy between that liquid and the restorative which every pump is supposed to yield.

"'E's going to 'ave a fit or something," said Constable Dawlish in alarm. "Look at 'is eyes, the way they're bolting out of 'is 'ead. An' the way 'is jaw fell down. Eppy-leptic, that's 'is trouble. What was you saying, Mr. Jupp?"

"Pinch me!" besought Mr. Jupp, looking wildly at the constable. "It'll be a relief to wake up and know I've bin dreaming. I'm nearly robbed an' murdered while driving home a hog on Christmas Eve, I master the villain single-'anded, give 'im over to the police, an' find 'e's my own son what I 'aven't set eyes on for three years."

"Per'aps you're mistaken," said Constable Hopkins pompously. "Per'aps there's something in the frosty air makes people see wrong about Christmas-time."

"I tell you the scoundrel pitched a tale a yard long about his poverty and his 'unger, and 'is sick father and wife and children what was crying out to see 'im on their death-beds," said Mr. Jupp, savagely glancing at the disconsolate figure of his eldest-begotten, "before 'e got hold o' this here comforter and tried to choke me with it."

"It was my lark," said Mr. William Jupp mendaciously. "I knowed you from the first minute I set eyes on you. And in my gladness and joy at finding you wasn't on a dying bed, as the postcard what Bessie got

by one more blooming liar. As for this tale about a postcard, my wife posted one more than two months ago, or, what means the same thing, an' not wanting to leave me, me being down with pewmonia, she run out and



"'I've took a 'ighway robber.'"

yesterday said you was, I played off a bit of gaff on you an' acted the giddy goat. There's the truth, an' if you don't believe it, I pity you!"

"I pity myself," said Mr. Jupp acidly, "for 'aving 'elped to make the world worse

give the postcard to the driver o' the Royal Mail, what runs reg'lar betwixt Crawlingford and London, to post for her."

"Then that's why the postcard wasn't delivered till yesterday," said Constable Hopkins. "Weedy, the man what has drove



the Royal Mail for thirty year, is famous for 'is bad memory. Why, he had a kitten from my wife's sister at Ealing to bring down to me, and never remembered to deliver it, but kep' carryin' it backwards and forwards until it was a full-grown cat, too big for the basket. Nobody blames Weedy; he drove the Royal Mail before the railway was put down, an' he expects to be superannuated in favour of a motor van every day, and pensioned off. He'll be missed, when he goes, by a lot of old-fangled folks what are used to his slow ways of hurrying an' prefer 'ossflesh to steam an' petrol."

"I see 'ow the muddle come about, then," said Mr. Jupp, coldly surveying his firstborn. "Well, you'd better git back 'ome again, William, things being as they are."

"I don't know as me and Dawlish can part with 'im so easy," said Constable Hopkins. "You've give 'im regularly in charge, and there ain't no witnesses to speak for him."

"Keep 'im as long as you like," said Mr. Jupp generously, rewinding his comforter in the act to depart, as Constable Hopkins looked at the whitewashed ceiling, and the discomfited Mr. William Jupp shuffled from one foot to another.

"You're a little hard on your family, though, ain't you?" observed Constable Dawlish in the ear of Mr. Jupp.

"Don't call 'em a family," said that gentleman with limpid candour. "It's a brood of 'ungry vultures, not to say hyenas and sharks, only waiting till I've drawn my last breath to try and pounce on my bit o' property. But if you'll let 'im go, Constable 'Opkins, I'll draw the line in favour of 'im so far as this. You come down here, Bill Jupp, not being asked, more for your own

pleasure than for mine, an' you'll go back more for my pleasure than for yours. I'll pay your fare back to London, but you'll go by the Royal Mail."

"Why, it'll take the whole night long and 'arf of next day for the Mail to git 'im as far as 'The Westbourne Arms,' at Ealing, where Weedy puts up," protested Constable Hopkins, "at 'is rate of going. However, please yourself."

"That's what I'm going to do," said the elder Jupp, his naturally forbidding countenance transformed by a beaming smile, as with a great deal of lumbering and creaking, a clumsy van-shaped vehicle, its glaring scarlet complexion showing fitfully in the light of two large side-lamps, and drawn by four shaggy, steaming horses, pulled up outside the gate.

"I'll take the passenger, to oblige 'ee, for two shillin'," said a quavering old man's voice, replying to Constable Dawlish's appeal, out of the foggy darkness enveloping the box-seat.

"Eighteenpence is enough, Weedy," corrected Mr. Jupp, "and you need not regard it as a passenger. It's a bit o' rubbidge I'm sendin' back to the place it came from. We're all wanted somewhere, if we only knowed it," he added, with subtle meaning, as the eighteenpence changed hands. Then Mr. William Jupp was summarily hoisted into the wooden shelved interior of the van, the octogenarian Weedy whipped up his smoking horses, and the Royal Mail, with its disappointed freight, lumbered heavily away into the frosty darkness.

"Yet blood's thicker than water," said Constable Dawlish.

"Depends on the kind o' water," said Mr. Jupp shortly, "and on the sort o' blood. Good night!"

## MY PRETTIE LADYE.

**I ASKED my prettie ladye**

**If she would come and wed,  
She pouted and she smiled on me,  
But not a word she said.**

**Oh, this is sad! A-lack-a-day!  
Will e'er this sorrow pass away?**

**I thought again I'd ask her,  
Nor did I plead in vain;  
She smiled on me and kissed me,  
And so doth end my pain.**

**No more I say A-lack-a-day!  
For all my sorrow's passed away.**

**I chid my prettie ladye**

**For proving false to me,  
She hanged her head and breathed a sigh,  
But said no word to me.**

**Oh, this is sad! Ah-well-a-day!  
Will e'er this sorrow pass away?**

JARL WADDINGTON.

# HALLEY'S COMET.

By PERCIVAL LOWELL.

THE following article, although it covers some of the ground already traversed in an article in our January number, is of interest as coming from the pen of one of the most distinguished of American astronomers, Professor Percival Lowell. His point of view is not always that of English men of science. In some ways it is more co-ordinated, if at times incapable of strict proof; but it is original and always worthy of serious consideration.



WITHIN the year into which we are now adventured, the world is destined to hear much of a certain comet. It will not be so imposing as some of its sisters, yet the daily press will be greatly concerned with its coming, and rightly, for it represents one of the most brilliant prophecies of man. Not in itself, but in its embodiment of prediction, lies the interest of the object to which so many eyes will soon be turned.

To the world at large it first appeared in the morning paper heralded as having been caught the night before on a photographic plate, and through that medium alone it was discernible for some little time. For at its detection it was the faintest of telescopic stars, distinguishable from the tiny star-points near it only by its slight shift of place from day to day. Then slowly it gathered substance, showing as a round, nebulous spot of light to the many glasses pointed at it, approaching nearer and nearer to the limit of naked eyesight.

From the day upon which it was first photographed, its career has been carefully watched and studied. Telescopes large and small have been turned on it, cameras have been set to take its picture, and spectroscopes—instruments for sifting the rays of light—levelled at it to mark of what its light be made.

Transformations of rare beauty and strange import will take place in it. The round, nebulous body will proceed to throw off hood-like veils from its head, directed toward the sun, which then, falling back, will lengthen into a fiery train, several trains, perhaps, both curved and straight, and thus apparelled the comet will sweep in streaming splendour around the sun.

No wonder it will be watched. But compelling as it will our gaze, still more so will it prove compelling to thought, for the comet

is Halley's Comet, bound once more about the sun after long sojourn out near Neptune in the depths of space. A comet with a history this—one which would turn all eyes to it, though it were itself anything but grand.

Very soon after Newton formulated the law of gravitation, his friend, Edmund Halley, then a comparatively young man, destined to be one of the greatest astronomers who ever lived, was minded to apply Newton's new law to those seemingly erratic bodies, the "hairy stars," or comets, one of which had recently appeared in 1682.

Among the records of twenty-four which he examined, he was struck by the similarity in the paths of three—the comets of 1531, 1607, and the late visitor of 1682. Not only were the intervals between their advents approximately the same, seventy-five years, but their orbits proved to be singularly alike. He at once guessed them to be one, rightly saw that the disturbing influence of the planets, near which the comet must have passed, might account for the slight difference of path on the different occasions, and boldly predicted its return at the end of 1758 or early in 1759. He died before the time set for his prophecy's fulfilment, leaving behind him this memorable enjoining to posterity.

As the time set for its return approached, astronomers began to calculate when it should be due. Clairaut, the most accomplished mathematician of his time, found that Saturn should retard it by one hundred days, Jupiter by six hundred and eighteen, and that its reaching its nearest point to the sun, in rounding about him, should occur within a month, one way or the other, of the middle of April. True to the far-sightedness of genius, the comet appeared late in December, 1758, and rounded the sun on March 12, 1759.

Its next advent was due in 1835. Meanwhile, methods of calculation had made progress, and the exact date of its passing perihelion was fixed by Rosenberger, its best determinator, as November 14. It turned the goal on November 16, only two days from its predicted time.

Computation of the disturbances due to the planets, near which lies the comet's path, have continued to improve, and the skill of the two astronomers engaged on the subject, Cowell and Crommelin, has been shown by the fact that the comet is following almost exactly the path they calculated for it from the details of its last appearance in 1835. The comet will be nearest the earth between May 20 and 21, distant twelve million of miles, and will be best seen in the evening about May 21.

Just as celestial mechanics have greatly advanced since Halley made his memorable prediction, so even more has man's knowledge of what a comet is. Indeed, this latter understanding has but recently been got.

Though Halley had shown that one comet at least moved in a closed orbit about the sun, coming back regularly to pay that body allegiance, it was long thought that comets, as a rule, were wanderers in space, passing from sun to sun. Such statements may still be read in many books on astronomy; but we now know them to be in error. From the absence of any certainly unclosed, or hyperbolic, orbits pursued by them, coupled with the now assured motion of the sun, we have orbital evidence that they all form part and parcel of the solar system, part of the sun's retinue as he sweeps onward in space.

As we also know that the whole solar system evolved probably from a catastrophic approach of two former suns, one of which, our own, remained behind in a shattered condition, we perceive that comets are the outlying remains of the *débris* which were not gathered into planets owing to the eccentric character of their paths. The orderly sweeping up by gravitation of the greater portion of the wreck into compact masses, revolving in nearly circular orbits about a central sun, left fragments more or less out of the general plane to stay uncoalesced. Some of these became the little minor planets, some comets and meteor trains, to which, as we shall see, comets are akin.

The last sentence gives us the key to the constitution of a comet. In November, 1799, occurred a superb shower of shooting stars, which was seen and described by Alexander von Humboldt. In November, 1833, the interest excited by this great shower led to a very remarkable discovery.

From a study of its meteors, Olmstead found that they all came from a common point of the sky, and from this he concluded that they constituted a swarm which he

suggested was a comet. Doubt of the cometary character of the August meteors, or Perseids, was caused by the fact that a shower occurred every year, showing that the members must be distributed in a ring. In 1867, however, Schiaparelli published a paper on the Perseids, in which he brought out the striking fact that the swarm was travelling in the same orbit as Tuttle's Comet of 1862, and from this he inferred the oneness of the two classes of bodies.

Soon afterwards Leverrier published his orbit of another shower, the Leonids, and almost simultaneously, but with no idea of a connection between them, Oppolzer published his of Tempel's Comet of 1866: the two orbits were seen to be practically identical. Two such coincidences were not likely to be due to chance, and, the subject being followed up, several such associations of comets and meteoric swarms were discovered.

This led to comprehension of the relationship, which may be put thus: a meteor swarm is nothing more nor less than a disintegrated comet, or, reversely, a comet is an, as yet, unscattered swarm. Researches begun by Schiaparelli and perfected since by Charlier, Luc Picard, and Callandreau, have shown mathematically that such a swarm must inevitably be broken up if it passes near a planet or the sun, because the difference in the pull of the planet upon its several parts is greater than the binding attraction of the comet's own mass, unless the separate meteors be packed relatively close.

We know, indeed, how close the density of the swarm must be—three times what the density of the planet, or the sun, would be, if extended to the swarm's distance, for the swarm to hold together.

Now, a breaking up of such a comet has actually been witnessed. The lost comet of Biela divided thus, and so did the comets of 1882 and 1899. From which we conclude, in addition to what the identity of orbit tells us, that a comet is such a disintegrable swarm of meteorites—bits, that is, of iron or stone, full of imprisoned gases, travelling together like a swarm of bees. Some of the pieces are large, some small, and so near together that they constantly collide while still pursuing a common path. This accounts for the great bulk, yet insignificant mass, of the comet; for, in spite of their formidable look, comets produce no disturbance on the planets which they pass.

Travelling as they do in very elongated ellipses, with the sun in one of the foci, as the attracting point is called, most of their

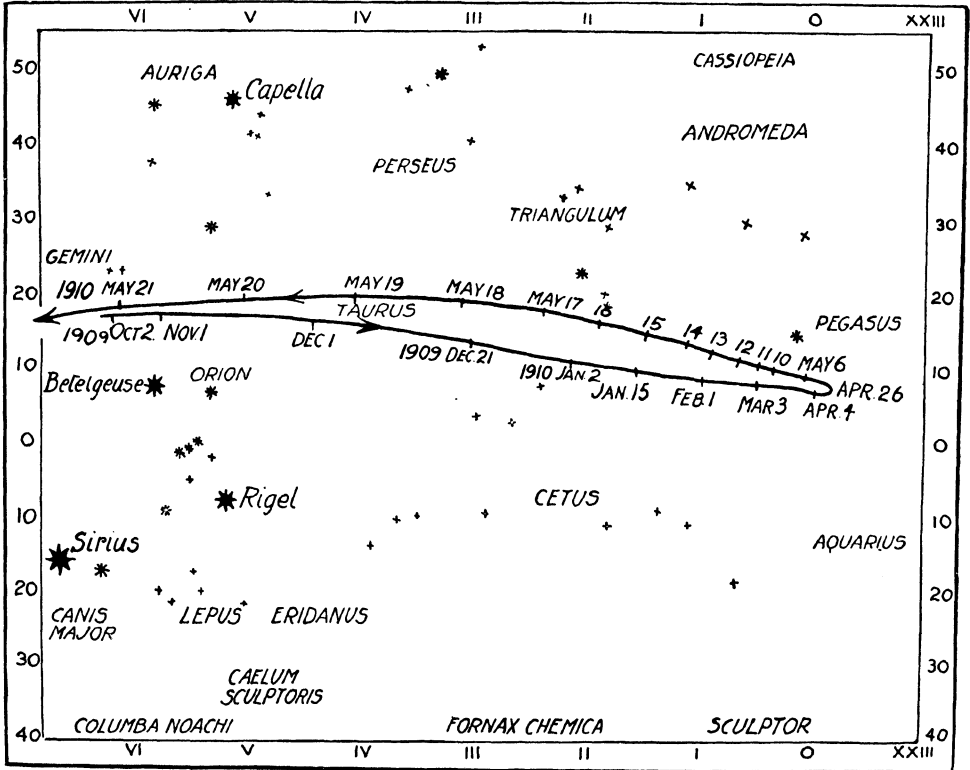
journey is spent in slow uneventfulness far away from the hearth of the system—hearth is just what the word focus means. They are then small globular aggregations, sluggish and dim, a little roundish nebula in look. Such they appear when first descried in the telescope coming in from space; for they are rarely seen at all until they have entered within the orbit of Mars. Distance in part, but still more their own behaviour, till then keeps them hid.

Within this nebulosity, known as the

unblanketed sunward side of the moon by Very. This temperature is  $353^{\circ}$  Fahrenheit, or  $141^{\circ}$  Fahrenheit above the boiling-point of water.

And this heat must increase as the comet approaches the sun inversely as the square of the distance. At half the radius of the earth's orbit it is already four times as great above absolute zero; at a quarter, sixteen times, and so on increasingly, the temperature rising into the thousands of degrees.

No wonder the comet acts as it does. It



THE COURSE OF HALLEY'S COMET THROUGH THE HEAVENS.

Reproduced, by permission, from "The Daily Mail."

head, appears, as it nears us, a bright spot, the nucleus. Then occurs a complete change in the deportment of the body—one which renders it the observed of all observers, and in less civilised times occasioned its being held the harbinger of distress, disease, and death.

As soon as the comet gets near enough, the heat of the sun sets up commotion within it. We are enabled to infer that this heat is great at the earth's distance from the sun, in spite of the cold of space, by the recent determination of the temperature of the

at once becomes uneasy, waxes in light, and, as the spectroscope reveals, disruptive electric discharges start in it which let out the imprisoned gases. Then begins that spectacular career of perihelion passage which makes the comet so superb an object, and for which it pays so dear. The gases which are thus thrust out from the interior of the separate meteorites, together with such particles of the iron as are made gaseous by the heat, fall prey to another force beside gravitation. This force is the impact of light itself, the light emitted by the sun.

That so immaterial a thing as a beam of light can have power to move even a pith ball is a conception not easy to grasp. Yet there is no doubt of the fact, theoretically calculated years ago by Clark Maxwell from his electro-magnetic theory of light. For the gaseous particles proceed to be repelled by the sun at enormous speed, each behaving exactly as it should by mathematical analysis, if such were the occasioning cause. Evidently the light waves have a propelling power in the direction of their own motion equal to their own speed.

Why, then, is it, it will be asked, that the planets betray no such effect in spite of their size. The answer is because of that very size. Gravity acts on the mass, a matter of three dimensions; the light-force on the surface of the body, a matter of two. As a body diminishes in size, therefore, its surface bears a greater and greater ratio to its mass, until, when small enough, the second force is actually the stronger of the two.

This relation is strictly betrayed in the conduct of the tail. The imprisoned gases, heated to expulsion on the sunward side of the comet, rise toward him in a series of exquisite mantling envelopes, as if the comet's head were veiling itself from the too ardent gaze of the sun. Then, after rising to a certain height, their initial impetus overcome, they fall back, repelled by the light-waves, though still attracted by gravity, and are driven out to form the tail of the comet, a fresh envelope taking what had been their place.

Sometimes only a single tail is formed, but at others two or even three are shot out; and when this happens, one is nearly straight, one curved, and one greatly bent. Now, calculation shows that the repelling force, in the case of the first, is fourteen times that of gravity, in the second from two and two-tenths times to half that amount of it, and in the third only about one-fifth of gravity. But these are the very ratios which particles of hydrogen gas, of the hydrocarbons, and of iron or sodium, would respectively show. Such is Bredechin's remarkable discovery.

Spectroscopy has stepped in to confirm it, for the spectrum of the second type of tail is shown by it to be that of the hydrocarbons. The first type has not yet been subjected to the test, no sufficiently brilliant comet having been seen since the spectroscope was invented.

As the comet approaches the sun, the display becomes more violent and more spectacular. Finer and wilder grows the

pageant, the "hairy star" loosening its tresses, which had stood sedately coiled about its head amid the depths of space, to stream in gorgeous gleams behind it, as it pays its orbital bow to the ruler of its course, and then its obeisance. It seemingly backs away in keeping with the etiquette to royalty, turning always its face sunward as it retreats whence it came.

But it pays dearly for its display; the matter going to form the tail is lost to the comet for good. It can never be recovered, but is driven farther and farther away. Thus, of that very part of itself upon which its brilliant showing depends, it has in great portion been deprived. At each successive return to the sun, some of its virtue is thus lost, and this is why the periodic comets—those that have made many visits—are the small and inconspicuous objects they are. It is only the comets of long ellipses and very distant habit of which the perihelion pageant proves so fine.

This brings us back to Halley's Comet. In its fresh return to the sun that we now await, it will repeat the performance we have sketched. What it may lack in optical effect it will make up to the mind's eye by the thoughts its presence cannot but evoke. For it has a human history beyond any of its kind, and in ages past was a gorgeous object.

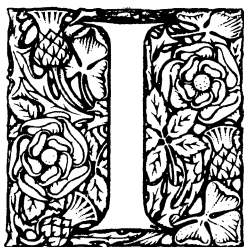
Its first recorded apparition was before the Christian era. In 1066 it piloted William the Conqueror to England, being the comet of the Bayeux Tapestry. Lastly, in 1682, it spoke to the mind of Halley, and now worthily bears his name.

In the Middle Ages it was still a superb object, with a tail many degrees in length. In 1835 it was a much less impressive object, but it had gained in prestige what it had lost in portentousness; and the same should still more be true this time. Each occasion of its coming finds a new world to greet it, for its period of seventy-five years is the span of human life. It is told of the present Nestor of Harvard professors that, when he was a little boy, he was taken out by his father to see a comet, and that his father then said to him impressively: "Remember this night, my boy, for if you live to be a very old man, you will see that comet again."

He may yet do so. But such opportunity is very rare. Practically speaking, the world that once sees Halley's Comet, like Halley himself, never sees it again; for when it returns, all those who now behold it will have ceased to be.

# THE MYSTERIOUS TYPEWRITER.

By F. FRANKFORT MOORE.



WAS smoking my pipe in Julian Drellincourt's garden, just outside the open window of his study, when the village telegraph boy came up the avenue.

"Me?" I called to him. "Me—Copley?"

"No, sir; Bertram," he replied, and I nodded for him to go on.

Elsie Bertram was the name of the girl who was typewriting for Julian Drellincourt. I could hear the faint click, every now and again, of her machine; for between the front room, where she worked, and the study, where Julian wrote, there was only a folding door, and it was usually left open to facilitate her occasional application to him for the identity of a word in his MS.; his handwriting was execrable.

The boy delivered the telegram, and he had passed through the gate on to the road again before I heard the little cry that came from Miss Bertram. I sat up and removed my pipe, awaiting developments.

"What is that? Not another lever broken?" said Julian, raising his voice so that it could be heard beyond the folding door.

I heard the door open quickly.

"Oh, Mr. Drellincourt," she cried, "I have just had a telegram—bad news—could not be worse—what shall I do? I cannot leave your work—but I must—I must—oh, there is no help for it, and no one can read it but myself—only my father—perhaps even now—at this very moment—oh, my poor father!"

She dropped into a chair and wept in a most awkward way, with the side of her head just touching the curve of the back. It was a walnut chair—"early Georgian" it would be described in the auction room catalogue.

I had risen, intending to enter the study in case I might be of some use either to the young woman or to my friend Julian; but when I saw how overcome she was, I knew that, for the present, at least, I could be of no use.

A man always feels a helpless fool when a girl—even a plain girl—is weeping in his presence. Sometimes he feels not only helpless, but obtrusive—guilty of bad taste. I preferred that Julian Drellincourt should have this experience rather than myself; and from the way he said—

"Now, now, please do not give way—oh, it will never do for you to give way, Miss Bertram; you must be brave—bear up"—I knew that he was feeling all that a man feels in the presence of a weeping woman. He was uncomfortable to a point of silliness.

But at last he did the right thing; he went to the girl and laid his hand on her shoulder without a word for some time. It was in a very low voice that he said—

"Tell me all that you can, my dear child; your unhappiness makes me very unhappy. Tell me all—when you feel able."

There was a long silence. A bee went humming through the window and round the room.

"Forgive me," I heard her say in the course of a minute or two, in the tone of the brave girl who has succeeded in pulling herself together. "Forgive me, Mr. Drellincourt. There is really no cause for me to break down—at least, not yet. He is not dead—only—well, a sudden seizure may mean anything—those are the words of the telegram." I heard the rustle of the official paper. "Yes, 'Father had sudden seizure—come at once.' My sister Mabel sent it; but she has always been easily alarmed. Still—"

"Surely she would not be so foolish as to telegraph to you in so urgent a way unless the thing was serious," said Julian; that was his notion of saying something tactful—something to calm her. He had a painfully logical mind. If he had not such a mind, he would never have attained distinction in the scientific world. "Your father must be very ill," he added—"very ill indeed, unless—"

"That's just it—unless Mabel is foolish. She has frequently shown herself to be foolish, poor girl! You see, she is very young, Mr. Drellincourt, and she lives all alone with father, and the sea comes up to the very door of the house almost."



I did not perceive all at once the exact logical force of the excuses she was making for her sister's possible foolishness; but it seemed that Julian did, for he said, with an air of relief—

"Oh, in that case—— But surely, in such a matter as this, she would not allow herself to be influenced by—by—whatever she may have been in the habit—that is to say, whatever you may have fancied——"

Happily, his floundering attempts to express his appreciation of what was on the girl's mind, and at the same time to suggest that she might possibly be mistaken—just when he should not have tried to suggest anything of the kind—were interrupted by the arrival of his aunt, Mrs. Howe, of Low Grange.

"I sent on the telegraph boy with your message, Elsie; I hope it contained nothing of importance," she cried before she had got quite through the door. "What, nothing serious—the General—Mabel—what?"

She had seen in a moment that the telegram contained bad news.

"What am I to do?" said Elsie plaintively, handing her the despatch.

"Dear me!" said Mrs. Howe, when she had read the words. "Dear me! Of course you must go to him. But there's no need for you to assume the worst. Your father has an excellent constitution. This may only be a trifle; Mabel has always been nervous since your mother's death. She fancied that you had consumption some time ago, did she not? Never mind; you must go to him at once. Have you looked up the trains? You cannot possibly catch the boat to-night."

"I have not had time to look up anything," said Elsie, "and I was wondering if—if—but what about my work here? No one can take my place, and the magazine article must be posted by Saturday at the furthest. Isn't that so, Mr. Drellincourt?"

"Not a day later," he replied.

"It cannot be helped," said Mrs. Howe, who had her own opinion on the subject of the importance of magazine articles. "It cannot be helped. You must go to your father's side without delay. Julian can send to London for another typist."

"Impossible—impossible," said the girl, in a voice that sounded like a wail. "No one could do it but myself—no one. Have you not had experience of that, Mr. Drellincourt? Did not I come because you were in despair?"

"Undoubtedly," he replied. "You are the only one who can make anything of my

wretched scrawl, and even you have to stop over a word now and again."

"And yet I must go away now, leaving the article unfinished, and that horrid Dr. Colbourn may be able to claim the discovery of the arithmetron cells—you know that he is on the track of them, Mrs. Howe."

"I want to hear nothing about Dr. Colbourn; all I want to hear is what time you intend to start for Jersey. Perhaps you may be able to return in time to finish the article."

"Impossible. They will keep me for weeks, even if my father should have quite recovered," said Elsie. "Oh, was there ever anything so unfortunate? And I was flattering myself on being able to do something to help you, Mr. Drellincourt—to do something useful in the world—but instead of that I have ruined your prospects."

"Was ever such nonsense talked by a human girl?" cried Mrs. Howe. "Put on your hat and come with me. You may be able to catch the steamer from Southampton to-night. Go on with your work, Julian."

Mrs. Howe was an eminently practical woman. I had now no difficulty in believing all the stories told about her management of her husband's station in the Bengal Presidency at a very trying time.

Before another minute had passed, she had bundled Miss Bertram out of the house. Elsie did not shed a tear when taking leave of Julian; the presence of his aunt acted as a potent "lacrimafuge."

When the two ladies had departed, I looked through the French window of the study and saw that Julian Drellincourt was sitting in his working chair, and that, like Kempenfeldt's, his fingers grasped the pen; but his chin rested on the other hand, his elbow being on the table, and he was making no attempt to resume his writing. He was gazing abstractedly at the further wall.

I entered the room whistling and pretending that I was in need of a match; but he never stirred. He allowed me to push things about, searching for a matchbox, and made no attempt to help me. He was clearly lost in thought.

"I'll tell you how I feel, Eddy," he said at last. "I feel as if I had suddenly made a great discovery—stumbled upon it, as usual, and that I am too much surprised to be able to think of ordinary things."

"Such as the crushing of Colbourn," I remarked. "And what may be the nature of your discovery? Is it that there's a good

deal to be said in favour of my career of brilliant inactivity?"

He seemed to fall into another rut of thought.

"The general idea about girls is that they have no sense of honour and no idea of responsibility. But here is a girl whose one grief is that my article would not be ready in time for *The Review*. That was all she thought about—my interests, Eddy—my interests only."

"Yes; she put her father's sudden seizure far in the background, almost out of sight," I suggested.

He did not take up my sarcasm. Quite the contrary; he jumped at my suggestion.

"She did—she did!" he cried. "And yet people say that girls have no sense of responsibility—no sense of duty."

"People are fools where girls are concerned," said I.

He refused his second dose of my sarcasm.

"They are fools," he said. "There was that girl quite broken down because she was

interrupted in—in what? In making legible the vile scrawl that I placed before her. Think of that! Think how you would feel if it was laid on you to work through page after page of my handwriting."

"Yes; I can see myself imploring the judge to be merciful and alter my sentence to one of penal servitude for ten years."

"Will she ever come back to that place, I wonder," he said in a low voice. He was gazing at the seat which she had lately occupied and at the clumsy ridge of the typewriter cover. I thought the moment a suitable one for cleaning my pipe.

"I wonder," said I.

"I am sure she will," he cried at once. "Her heart was in that work."

"Yours was, at any rate."

"Oh, it was only natural that mine should be in it."

"Then it was only natural that hers should be there, too."

"What do you mean by that—some of your cheap cynicism, I suppose?"

I laughed before I said—

"I'll run up to town to-morrow and do



"She dropped into a chair and wept."

my best to get someone who will type for you until she returns."

"You will do nothing of the sort," he cried almost angrily—certainly indignantly. "Good Heavens, man, do you fancy that I would allow anyone to continue what she has begun?"

"Oh, in that case—what page have you reached in your manuscript?"

"Twenty-seven."

"And you will probably go on to sixty or seventy—a pretty fair amount of arrears to lay before Miss Bertram on her return."

He did not think my argument worth replying to. He was standing at the open fold of the door gazing at the typewriter.

"What a pity it is that I am such a duffer at typewriting!" he said at last, not addressing me, but simply uttering his reflection of the moment. "What a satisfaction it would be to her to find, on her return, that her absence had not caused me so much inconvenience as she fancied it should!"

I was not quite sure that he was right in his surmise, but I was quite sure that he had reached that condition in which a man would make any sacrifice to prevent a girl—a certain girl—from feeling even the smallest amount of inconvenience. And yet only the evening before I had given the smile of a sceptic when Mrs. Howe had hinted to me her belief that Julian was as much in love with Miss Bertram as Miss Bertram was with him. A great deal had been revealed to me within the past hour, in addition to the powers of observation of a woman of Mrs. Howe's experience of life.

"I wish to Heavens I had practised longer at the typewriter!" he muttered.

"Don't bother about your neglected opportunities, old chap," said I. "Sit down and finish your article in manuscript. You know as well as I do that you would have no time to do your typewriting as well as your ordinary—your extraordinary writing."

I left him still gazing sentimentally at the cover of the typewriter, the first time, I am sure, that that protective medium was ever the object of such a look, and drove Mrs. Howe and Miss Bertram to the station, five miles away, and when returning to Low Croft with the former, did my best to take back my sceptical smile of the previous evening.

"I believe you were quite right in what you hinted at respecting Julian and Miss Bertram," I said, in a humble and apologetic tone of voice.

"Of course I was right, and I hope I am right in believing that this sudden separation will open the man's eyes to his own condition."

"I believe that that specific has begun to work already," said I. "You are really an extraordinary person, Mrs. Howe," I continued. "I shouldn't wonder if it was you who sent that telegram calling her away."

"Oh, no, I did nothing of the sort; that was Providence," said she solemnly. "But I saw clearly how I could back it up. Beyond a doubt, Elsie is the very wife that Julian should have."

We had been quite an interesting little community during the past six or seven weeks at the village of Havrington. Mrs. Howe occupied the place of honour at Low Grange, a lovely old Tudor house with not too much of a park about it. She was the widow of a distinguished Indian officer. Julian Drellin-court, the distinguished *savant*, had taken Mead Cottage for the summer, in order to complete the monograph, which has since made him famous, on the arithmetron cellular principle which he had discovered, and I, invalided home from bridge-building in Brazil, was living with my mother at our little place known as Southover, only a mile up the valley of the Havring. We were always good friends, Julian and I, having been at Harrow together, and my father having been a comrade of General Howe in the old days.

Julian had made considerable progress with his great work when his difficulties with typewriters threatened to overwhelm him. The fact was that he wrote the most illegible scrawl that was ever produced even by a man of genius, and every attempt that he made to induce a typist to undertake a second instalment of his MS. proved unavailing. He was in despair, when his aunt mentioned casually one day that Elsie Bertram, the elder daughter of Colonel Bertram, was coming to visit her. She told us how this young lady had determined to follow the example of so many modern girls by earning her own living, and how she had been a great success as the secretary and amanuensis to Sir Hopewell Strain, the great electrician, until his departure for Japan provided her with six months of freedom.

On the day of the arrival of this young lady, we all dined together at Low Grange, and once more Julian had a story of frustrated hopes in respect of his latest typist—a young man who had come with the highest testimonials, but with an unfor-

fortunate superabundance of self-confidence that caused him to make a shot at every hieroglyph in Julian's copy, the result being the direst confusion.

"My nephew is the worst writer in the world," Mrs. Howe explained to Miss Bertram.

"He could not be worse than Sir Hopewell Strain," said the girl.

"Oh, I'll back Julian against all comers," said his aunt.

"After two years with Sir Hopewell, I should not be afraid to face the worst—the next worst—caligraphy in the world," laughed Miss Bertram.

Within five minutes she had undertaken, with Mrs. Howe's consent, to try to do something with Julian's book, and before the evening of the next day she had proved her ability to face and overcome his worst scrawl. From that day on she was accustomed to spend from three to four hours in the room opening off Julian's study, reproducing in legible form the pages which he had written, and it soon became plain that she was taking a great deal of interest in the researches of Mr. Dreilincourt; but to me, at least, it seemed that Mr. Dreilincourt was too greatly absorbed in his book and, later, in the article which he was writing for the leading scientific magazine, preparing the world for the revelations embodied in his book, to be able to give any attention to the personal charm of the young lady. Mrs. Howe knew better, as was proved by his conversation with me just recorded.

He dined with my mother and me that same evening, and was undoubtedly in a highly strung condition, repeating all that he had said to me about the devotion of Miss Bertram to her duty, and bemoaning his own stupidity as a typewriter.

"I can work it all right, but I am dreadfully slow about it. I have not patience to persist," he said. "And the worst of it is, that I know Miss Bertram will be worried by the thought that the break in her work will prevent the article from appearing in *The Review*. I should like to spare her that worry, but I cannot—I cannot! What can I do? Nothing—absolutely nothing!"

We did our best to turn his thoughts in another direction, but, of course, we failed. The fact was that he was in a very nervous condition, and when he had left us, my good mother showed me very clearly that it was my duty to force him to leave off work and come away with me for a day or two. I promised her to talk seriously with him on this matter,

and agreed with her that he was at the point of a nervous breakdown.

Primed with the soundest and most reasonable arguments which would appeal to every one except the most pig-headed, I strolled across the paddock to Mead Cottage the next morning. Julian was pacing the garden walk at the side, and the moment I saw him I felt that the strongest argument I could submit to him for the necessity of his taking a holiday would be the sight of the reflection of his face in a mirror. He looked jaded almost to a point of wildness, and his eyes had a strange, hollow look that made me think of queer things. But I was soon thinking of queerer when he greeted me with a smile that was not a smile, saying—

"I'm glad that you've come so early."

"So am I," I said pointedly.

"Yes, the fact is that something rather funny has occurred," he went on.

"You don't just at this moment look as if your attention had been lately given to anything particularly humorous," said I. "But, if it has, I'm going to ask it on behalf of something rather serious."

"Wait until you hear what has happened," said he. "I wonder if you remember asking me yesterday what page I had reached in my article for the magazine."

"I remember. You had got to page twenty-seven."

"Yes; I had just begun page twenty-seven, and Miss Bertram had typed up to twenty. I was accustomed to give her five pages at a time, and I had handed her from twenty to twenty-five yesterday morning. She had scarcely begun twenty, when that confounded telegram came for her."

"Quite so; I heard her say to you—what was it?—something about the number of words on nineteen."

"You heard her? Yes, she said that the way I had written the mathematical formula had cut out over two hundred words, so that she had got through the page in twenty minutes instead of the full hour that she usually took for a page."

"That was it—something that way."

"That shows that she left off early on page twenty."

"Well, what's funny about that?"

"Nothing; but there's something in my coming downstairs this morning and finding page twenty completed and lying typed on my desk with pages twenty-one, twenty-two, and twenty-three."

"Yes, that would be funny if it had happened; but it didn't happen."

He took me by the arm and led me through the French window into the house, and pointed to several typewritten pages lying together beside the typewriter. The number of the page printed on the topmost was twenty-three.

"There they are for all the world to see, and they represent the greatest marvel that the scientific world has yet known."

I picked up the pages, and then turned to the little pile which Miss Bertram had typed previously to being interrupted by the telegram.

"I fancy that she must have made a mistake in the paging," said I. "Have you looked into that?"

"Naturally I looked into that the first thing," he replied.

"And you satisfied yourself that these are not the pages of the book—she must have typed more than a hundred of the book?"

"I had only to glance at one of the pages," said he. "It is to be hoped that I know the matter of my own composition, friend Eddy. That is better evidence than an examination of the paging. Now, what have you to say?"

"Nothing. I have nothing to say, beyond expressing a cordial agreement with the conclusion you have come to that the thing is funny."

"I tell you it is the strangest thing that has ever called for scientific explanation. You know that I have made experiments on the subject of thought in connection with electricity."

"I heard something about them. You tried to make out that a brain was a sort of Marconi receiver, and that, under certain conditions, it was susceptible of obtaining the impressions of another at a distance."

He laughed.

"That's good enough for a loose layman," said he. "To be more exact, I should begin by the statement that it has been proved that thought represents a certain displacement of matter, just as surely as any other act."

"Other act?"

"That's what I say. It has been proved that, so far as matter is concerned, the act of thinking is as material as the fact of doing."

"My poor head! Spare me this, old chap! I admit everything. Tell me directly what are your conclusions, and what bearing they have upon the mystery of those pages before us."

He put his hands in his pockets and

walked slowly with bent head across the room. Then he stood with his back to me for some time. When he returned to me, he said—

"I am a scientific man, Eddy, not one of your ridiculous fumblers in the occult—shallow idiots who, on a scrap of the most dubious evidence, jump to a conclusion that would mean a revolution of all that has previously been accepted as normal. I am a scientific man, and no scientific man is sure of anything, except that our knowledge of the forces of Nature and their working is advancing day by day. This being so, I can say that I have come to no conclusion on the subject of what seems the mystery of these pages. All that I feel is, that the incident may form another link in the chain of evidence which binds together these several truths that constitute a scientific theory."

"That is very cautiously put," said I. "I can't say that such a way of putting things makes a good beginning in a heart-to-heart conversation, or lets me have anything of a glimpse into what's on your mind. But, still, hadn't you better put on your hat and come with me for a stroll up the river? We'll talk of the days that are past, and not of those that are to come, bringing with them all the developments of scientific truth. The open air is best for you to-day."

He took a longing look at his desk, and then sighed.

"I thought that the arrival of that telegram yesterday was the greatest misfortune that could have happened to me; but, perhaps, like so many other things, including the spoiling of that photographic plate which led to the discovery of radium, it may mark the first step over the threshold—the threshold of the Great Unknown."

"Get your hat and prepare to give all your attention to the discovery of a practical coefficient for the working out of some problems in the consumption of tobacco."

We had a good walk, and I succeeded for a long time in keeping him from talking—perhaps even from thinking—upon the mystery of those pages. It was only when we had gone five or six miles along the river, and had turned into the bar parlour of the "Old Flail Inn" of Hollingby to have something to eat and drink, that he began to talk of that paper which he had written several years before, on the subject of what was commonly called "thought transference." He had plainly been greatly interested in the scientific aspects of the subject, and had made some suggestions as to the methods to

be pursued in order to verify the impressions of those of his *confreres* who suspected, with him, that an electric wave (speaking vulgarly) was accountable for such phenomena as had already been observed in this connection.

"We have all been watching you falling in love for the past month, and have been greatly edified by the spectacle."

"Is it possible?" he cried. "Heavens, why on earth did you not tell me so? There are a score of details in connection

with this most interesting of all natural phenomena which I should have liked to analyse in myself. Only by the collection of trustworthy data can one arrive at the truth regarding that strange phenomenon. Of course, it is of electric origin also, and I think it very likely that its manifestation is due to some abnormal correspondence of electrical conditions between two persons approaching one another. As for sex, could any more satisfactory suggestion be given of the relation between the sexes than that the one is the positive and the other the negative pole of the magnet? The complete form of life — the magnetic completeness — is effected by the union of the two. Yes, I should have liked to analyse several of the details incidental to the phenomenon. Why on earth did you not tell me when you first began to notice the matter?"

"Well, you see, I hadn't an electrometer handy, and I didn't want to bother you before I was sure," I replied.

He did not seem to hear me. He was gazing at the plate before him, and he remained gazing for a long time before he said—

"By Heavens, if it were possible to think that she——"



"Julian Drellincourt, in his pyjamas, playing upon the keys of the typewriter."

I endeavoured to turn his thoughts in another direction, and I fancied I had succeeded, when, after a long pause, he said—

"I wonder if I am really in love with Miss Bertram, Eddy?"

"Of course you are," I replied immediately.



He stopped short and shook his head.

"Go on," I said. "You are on the brink of a great truth."

"I was only thinking that, if she had the same feeling for me—call these electric conditions feelings, for the sake of intelligibility—I should have something to go upon in considering a theory to account for the transference of force necessary for the production of these typewritten pages."

"Take my advice and don't bother yourself about those pages. The girl will be back in the course of a week, and you can tell her that you love her, and ask her if she will be good enough to love you and continue to do typing for you, and all will be well. Meantime, stay yourself with flagons of Bass, and comfort yourself with—what have we here?—pickled onions. That was a noble sirloin in its prime. It is even now a splendid wreck. Saw away at it."

I insisted on his having a good lunch, and on the way home we discussed a few commonplaces of the variations in the formula relating to the relative expansion of soft iron and hard—a subject which I had practically made my own. I gratified my mother by compelling him to dine with us, and when he left for Mead Cottage, shortly before eleven o'clock that night, I felt that I had done a good deal for my friend Julian Drellincourt.

But when I found myself alone with my pipe later on, I could not help allowing my thoughts to fly from the scientific consideration of the phenomenon of falling in love, as illustrated (with some peculiarities) by my friend and Miss Bertram, to the rather more remarkable one of the typed pages. I had been so set upon carrying out my design of forcing him to take a holiday, that I had purposely avoided pursuing more closely the investigation of the typing of those pages. It certainly seemed to me that he had made out a very good case for the mystery, but at the same time I could not bring myself to accept the solution at which he had vaguely hinted. I had seen the experiment of the electric clocks, the one ticking in unison with the other, though they were connected by no wire; but I could scarcely accept his suggestion of the possibility of a young woman, some hundreds of miles away, being able to typewrite several pages of execrable copy solely by the exercise of her strong desire to do so, even taking into account the possibility of her having a very strong regard for the man who had written the scrawl. I felt that the fact of Julian's being led

to consider such an hypothesis was sufficient evidence that he was in need of a bracing holiday.

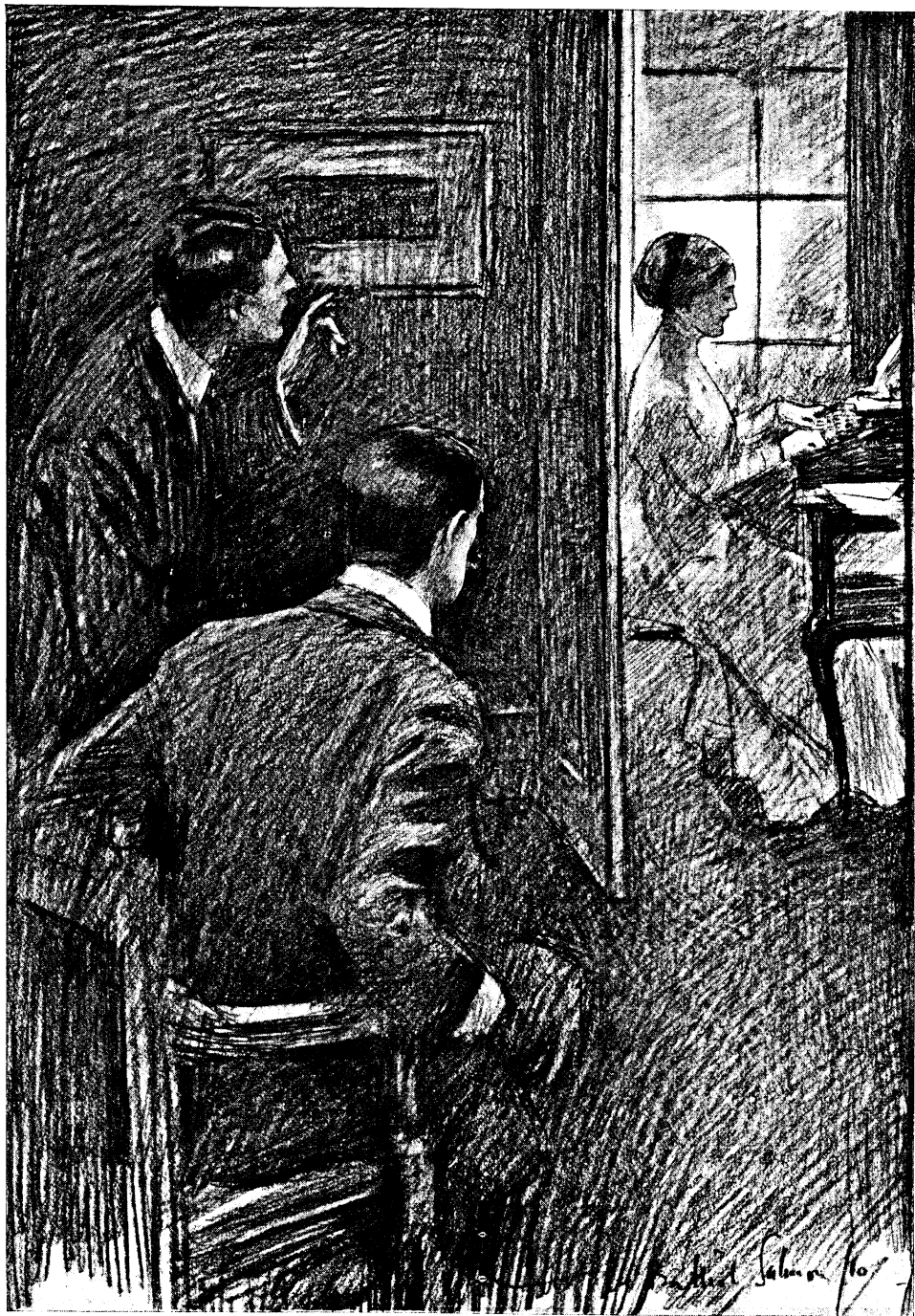
I went out upon the little terrace at the side of our garden, and sat down on the chair I liked to occupy on nights of full moon. It had always been a great pleasure to me to watch the gradual ascent of the orb, and the subtle covering of the valley with a veil of shimmering gauze. This night the moon was not due to rise until shortly before midnight, for she was some days past the full. While waiting for her appearance, I looked across the paddock, and saw that there was a light at the back of Mead Cottage, more than a quarter of a mile away. Now, Julian had given my mother a promise, on saying "Good night," that he would go straight to bed and not try to write a single line; and while I wondered why he had not kept his word, I determined to convince him that his sin was bound to find him out, and not to leave the cottage until he had gone to his room. So I strolled across the paddock, and in less than a quarter of an hour reached the side gate in the hedge and passed through into the garden.

The light did not come from the study; it was plainly in the room beyond the folding door, and as I intended to look through the window, and abuse him without entering the house, I went round to the front, and carried out my intention of spying. But what I saw, when I looked through the pane, surprised me so greatly that I could only continue gazing breathlessly in the direction of the light.

What I saw was the figure of Julian Drellincourt in his pyjamas, sitting at the table playing upon the keys of the typewriter.

My memory went back in a flash to the night when I had visited him at his rooms in Wadham, and had been surprised to find him sitting at the desk working out a problem that had been troubling him all the day. He had been fast asleep at that time, and I had not awakened him; so that, when the morning came, he had been puzzled to find the problem worked out to the end and with absolute correctness. He had done that in his sleep nine years ago, and he was now repeating the feat with a slight variation. Once, while I watched him, he raised his head, and as he faced the window, I saw that his eyes were the expressionless eyes of a somnambulist.

There was the solution of the mystery that had perplexed me and that had sent his



"Elsie Bertram seated in the chair in front of the typewriting machine."

mind wandering upon a strange track leading nowhere. But surely the solution of that mystery was only effected by the substitution of another. Some people would, I know, find it as difficult to believe, although there are scores of well-authenticated instances of its having taken place, that a man could do, when in the trance of a somnambulist, a work which he could perform only with difficulty when wide awake, as to accept the statement that the work had been done by a young woman many miles apart from it.

I had frequently heard of the great risk of startling a somnambulist, so I refrained from disturbing my friend at that time, though I might have done so with every caution, for the front door of the cottage was never locked at night, and I had only to turn the handle to get within. I did think for a moment that I should awaken him and send him to bed; but afterwards I felt that I should remain on the safe side—on the outside of the house; and so I left him typing away.

I could not help smiling the next morning, when I visited him and he met me with five additional typewritten pages in his hand.

"Can you account for these?" he asked me triumphantly; and, witnessing his air of triumph, I had not the heart to tell him the truth.

"I make no suggestion on the subject," I replied. "I only mean to take you off with me on another excursion. We'll go in the direction of Ingmar to-day."

"I'm quite willing," he said. "But I give you my word I am run down; I feel just now as if I had not had an hour's sleep all night."

We went off together; and once again he regaled me with an explanation, on a scientific basis, of the mystery of those typewritten pages.

"Look here," I cried at last, "I am ready to guarantee that you will not be subjected to a repetition of this mystery if you allow me to watch with you to-night for whatever may happen."

"My dear Eddy, that was the very thing I was about to beg of you to do for me," he said. "The fact is that I may be on the threshold of a great discovery, and I must have a sane witness to substantiate my observation. The value of one's own evidence in such matters is nil. A man may be in such a condition of mind as to be incapable of recording with scientific accuracy something that comes under his notice. That is how it is that so many ghost stories are

worthless. Scores of people believe that they have seen ghosts; but they see them singly, not in groups or in pairs. Now, if anything comes of this experience of mine, it can only be by your evidence—evidence of fact, remember; there must be no question of inference."

So he went on, and I listened to him, pitying him; the strain entailed by the operation of compressing the five hundred pages of his great work into the thirty pages of a magazine article had been too great for him.

"You may depend on me," I assured him several times before evening; and after dining with my mother, we set out for the cottage. I had given my mother a hint to the effect that Julian needed some looking after, and she commended my resolution to remain with him for the night.

We agreed to spend the night in the study, leaving the folding door ajar, so that we could both see and hear anything that might take place in the room where the typewriter stood on its table. He was sanguine that something important would take place, though I could see that he was doing his best to convince me that he was perfectly normal and coldly scientific in the view he took of the situation and its possibilities. He talked incessantly of the likelihood of man being able to control some of those tremendous forces of Nature, of whose working we now and again caught glimpses; and, not for the first time, did I realise the fact that the true poet—the true man of imagination, is not the "metre ballad-monger," but the man of science.

We talked over our pipes from midnight until his bracket clock struck three, and the summer dawn made the lamp unnecessary. When I turned it out and pulled up the blind, I saw him give a hasty and expectant glance through the half-open door, and I knew that, in spite of his science, he was disappointed that nothing had yet occurred to interrupt our conversation, which, by the way, partook of the nature of a monologue by him, picked out with questions by me and prolonged beyond the bounds of a lecture.

He did not seem disposed to talk so rapidly when the pale daylight was admitted to the room, but he did not appear to be in the least sleepy. I did not believe that I was so, either; but after another hour of our vigil, I found myself disposed to drop into a doze now and again. I had not the same inducement as he had to remain awake. I dozed

and dozed again for a space that I reckoned to be half an hour; and then I started into complete wakefulness, under the force of his grasp of my arm.

His hand had not relaxed its hold, and he was leaning forward in his chair gazing through the space of the half-opened door, the forefinger of his other hand being upraised to signal absolute silence.

In a second I was alert. By moving my head an inch or two, I was able to see all that he could see in the other room; and what came before my eyes was the figure of Elsie Bertram seated in the chair in front of the typewriting machine.

She was reading a page of the manuscript, and when she had finished it, she picked up a blank sheet of paper and adjusted it in the line-frame of the machine, and began to play upon the keys. I glanced at the clock, so that I might be able, in giving my evidence of the occurrence, to state its exact time, and found that it was half-past six, so that I must have been dozing for some hours. When I turned my eyes to the other room, I saw that the figure had made a pause, and a puzzled expression was on her face. She looked at the page of manuscript once again, and then picked up some others. Then she glanced around the table, and stretched out her hand for the pages of the new typewritten matter. These she examined with surprise, and after a long interval, she lay back on her chair and laughed. A moment later she rose and came to the half-opened door. She opened it wide and then gave a start and a cry on coming face to face with the two watchers.

"Gracious!" she exclaimed. "I had no idea that—that— What is the matter? Why do you stare at me in that way, as if I was a ghost?"

"You are not a ghost?" said I. "Are

you prepared to give us your word that you are not a ghost, Miss Bertram? Be careful, now; haven't you heard where wicked girls go who tell fibs? Honest Injin, are you really not a ghost?"

"Don't talk nonsense!" she said. "I returned to Mrs. Howe's late last night, and thought that, by beginning to work here so early, I should save the article for the magazine. I knew that the door was never locked at night, so I had no need to awaken the housekeeper. What I want to know is, who has been making a hash of these pages—from twenty on? Such typewriting! Oh, goodness, such typewriting! It looks as if someone had done it when asleep."

"And that is just what it should look like," said I.

"But what is the meaning of—of— Why, you don't seem as if you had been in bed all night," she cried disjunctedly.

"One of us, at least, is going to remedy all that now," said I. "Good night—I mean, good morning."

I left them alone together, and it was not until three hours had passed that I heard Miss Bertram's story. It was very simple. She had, after all, caught the boat on the day she had left us; she had reached Jersey to find her father in perfect health. He had only become exhausted through walking too rapidly up the hill on which his house was situated, and his silly young daughter had sent that alarming telegram to her sister, who, with a devotion to duty that deserved the heartiest commendation, had remained only two hours at her home, and had then come back to England by the next boat.

It was not until she had become Mrs. Drellincourt, and Julian had become famous, that I revealed to them the identity of the perpetrator of those execrable pages of typewriting.

## "IF."

**I**F I were blind, I should not know if it were night or day,

If it were time to go to sleep or sit right up and play,

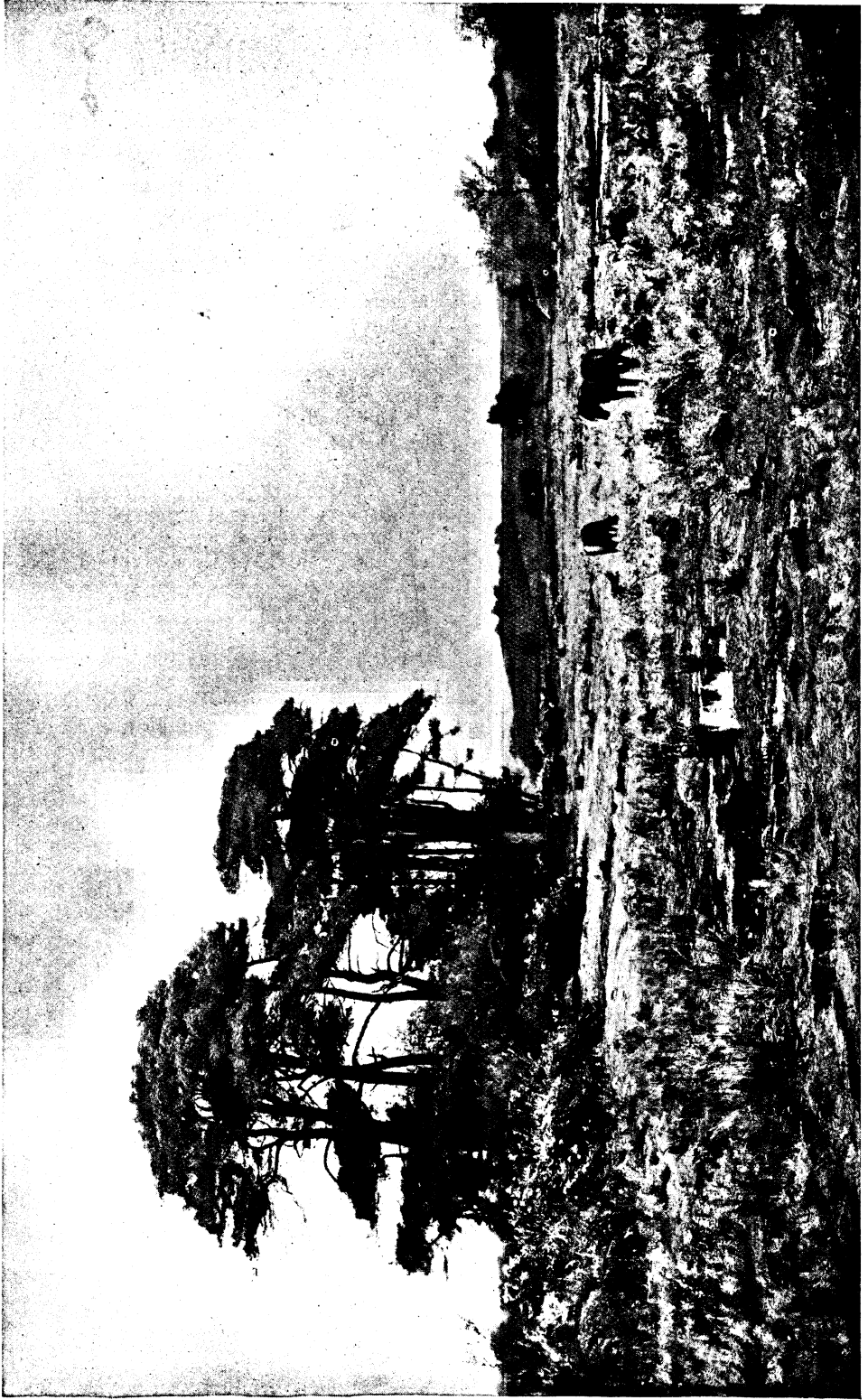
I could not see myself grow up as other children do,

Or know if I were only six or really twenty-two,

And all the time I'd have to trust the things that mother said,

And never know if I were sent too early off to bed.

ARCHIBALD SULLIVAN.



"WINTY MARCH." BY W. L. PICKNELL.

*From the original in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, reproduced by permission of the Corporation from a photograph by Mansell & Co.*

Salanio  
(Rev. C. Robertson).

Gratiano  
(Mr. Holloway).

Portia  
(Mrs. A. D. Flower).

The Duke  
(Mr. Spragg).

Bassanio  
(Mr. Brittain).



Salarino  
(Mr. Percy).

Shylock  
(Mr. Urwick).

Nerissa  
(Miss Danks).

Antonio  
(Mr. Webber).

THE TRIAL SCENE FROM "THE MERCHANT OF VENICE," AS PERFORMED BY MEMBERS OF ALL BRANCHES OF THE SOCIETY.

*Photograph by Graham, Leamington.*

## THE BRITISH EMPIRE SHAKESPEARE SOCIETY:

### ITS ORIGIN, DEVELOPMENT, AND SCOPE.

A FALLACY which has been very commonly maintained by doubters of the identity of the play-actor of Stratford-on-Avon with the author of the great literary heritage known as the work of William Shakespeare, has consisted in the frequent statement that Shakespeare himself attained but little glory while he lived, and gained still less tribute from those who came after him within the century or more that followed. It is a point of curiosity that any such view should ever have obtained, either in print or in conversational argument, for, as a matter of fact, the praise of Shakespeare went onward in steady development and accumulation from the tributes of his contemporaries and immediate successors in literature—"Rare Ben Jonson," Francis Meres ("the Muses would speak with Shakespeare's fine filed phrase, if they would speak English"), Richard Barnfield, John Weever, Michael Drayton, and others—to the magnificent eulogy of Milton's famous sonnet. And from Milton's time on, through the modish literature of the Restoration period, and the more pedantic feeling of eighteenth-century criticism, appreciation progressed,

until the more humane spirit of nineteenth-century letters completed the shrine of appreciation that had gradually been built around the name and work of Stratford's seer. The compiler of "Shakespeare's Centurie of Prayse" gave an interesting survey of the continuity with which homage was paid to Shakespeare throughout the first century after his death, and Mr. C. E. Hughes, in his delightful volume, "The Praise of Shakespeare," presents a still more comprehensive record, and one brought down to the tributes of our own day.

It is, however, somewhat curious, but still the fact, that the literary love for Shakespeare's work, and the resulting increase in the study of it, marched steadily onward side by side with a decreasing belief in the poet's plays as entertainments for the theatre-going public, until, by the middle of the Victorian era, only some half-dozen, or but few more than that, of the greater tragedies and comedies could be said any longer to hold the stage. Samuel Phelps, in his memorable management of Sadler's Wells Theatre, did his utmost to remove this reproach, but with the gradual passing of the



actors trained in his tradition, all but the more admittedly popular of Shakespeare's plays were relegated from the stage to the study again.

Throughout the period that ensued, however, before the full renaissance of the Shakespearean drama on the stage under the enlightened rule of the more literary of our modern actor-managers, the scholastic sense of the value of the Shakespearean repertoire continued steadily to increase in influence, and many sociable circles were

variety of different voices for different characters. Even when readers were not especially qualified to suggest any very subtle psychology, the mere contrast of voice between two different characters helped importantly to bring out the real significance of dialogue, either in "short cue" passages of quick give-and-take or in the longer and more poetical speeches.

But excellent as was the intention, and, in many cases, the achievement also, of such groups of amateur enthusiasts, they



*Photo by]*

*[McNeill, Stratford-on-Avon.*

THE ORSINO AND VIOLA OF ONE COMPANY AT THE SOCIETY'S ANNUAL PERFORMANCES AT STRATFORD-ON-AVON: MR. FRANK MACEY AND MRS. A. D. FLOWER.

formed, in towns and country districts alike, for the reading aloud of Shakespeare's plays by full casts of amateur readers, each of whom brought his or her personality to the representation of an individual character. One remembers how largely one's own early interest in Shakespeare's work was developed, after unilluminated grammatical studies of mere textual points, by the reality and the atmosphere of dramatic action imparted for the first time to the printed words by the reading of them with the necessary

suffered, as a rule, from lack of organisation. For a successful reading a sufficient number of people was the first essential, and how often one used to hear of postponements at the last moment through lack of numerical support within the confines of the one small social circle, while all the time neighbouring enthusiasts, personally unknown to the promoters of the meeting, would have been delighted to give their services!

It was organisation that was wanted—the evolution of some system which would

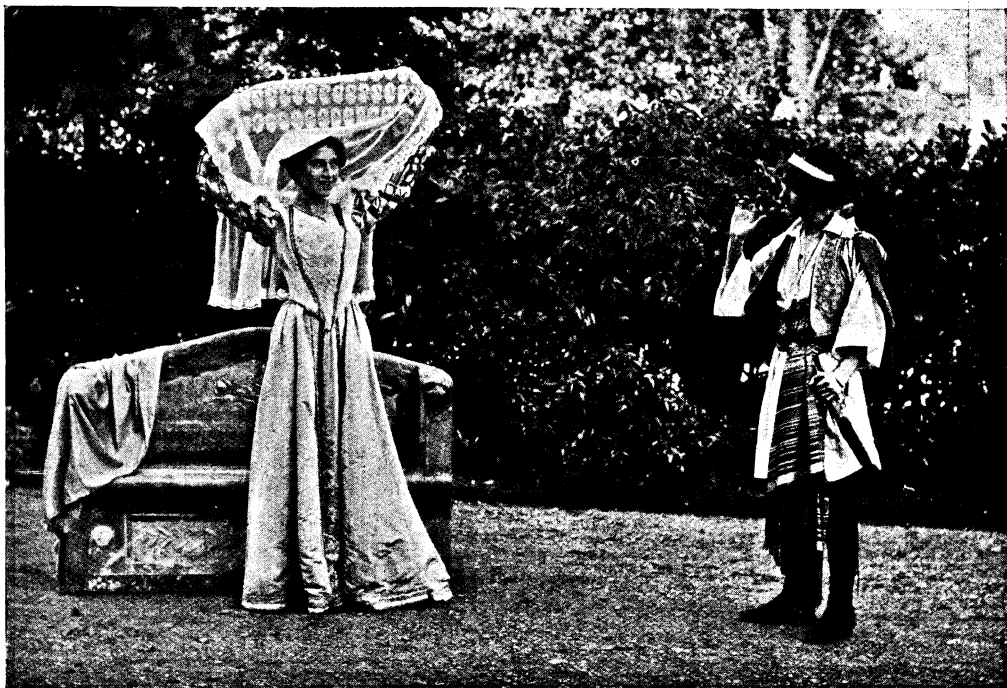
form centres for the suppressed interest of young men and maidens, old men and children, who really wanted to read aloud and hear read aloud the works under the spell of which they had fallen. "The theatre is irresistible," cried Matthew Arnold; "*organise* the theatre." In this case it was the amateur theatre only, but owing to the vast size of it, organisation was



THE ORSINO AND VIOLA OF THE OTHER CAST AT THE SAME SERIES OF PERFORMANCES: MR. HUMPHREYS AND MISS RUTH ANDERSON.

possibly all the more important, certainly all the more essential. It was also the theatre in the largest sense of the term, that is, the Shakespearean drama not as subject-matter only for histrionic interpretation, but as a wide field for literary study and spiritual speculation, fruitful with influences of even national importance.

Some eight years ago, Miss Greta Morrill,



OLIVIA AND VIOLA: MISS ENID ROSE AND MISS RUTH ANDERSON.

*Two photographs by McNeill, Stratford-on-Avon.*



*Photo by]*

*[McNeill, Stratford-on-Avon.*

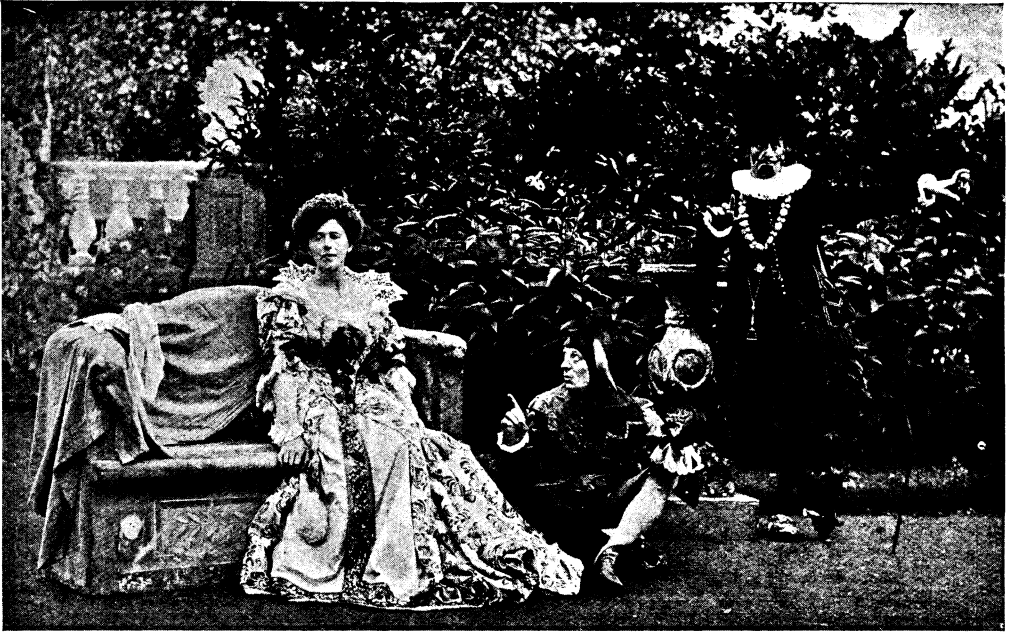
VIOLA AND FESTE, THE CLOWN: MRS. A. D. FLOWER AND MR. G. H. HOLLOWAY.

*Mr. Holloway played the Clown in one production, and Malvolio in the other.*

whose love of the Shakespearean drama led her to follow Matthew Arnold's precept and "organise" scattered enthusiasts already in existence into harmonious league with the many potential adherents of the rising generation, founded the British Empire Shakespeare Society.

In the earlier stages of her scheme, Miss Morritt had the benefit of valuable advice and help from the late Sir Henry Irving, who became the first president of the Society ;

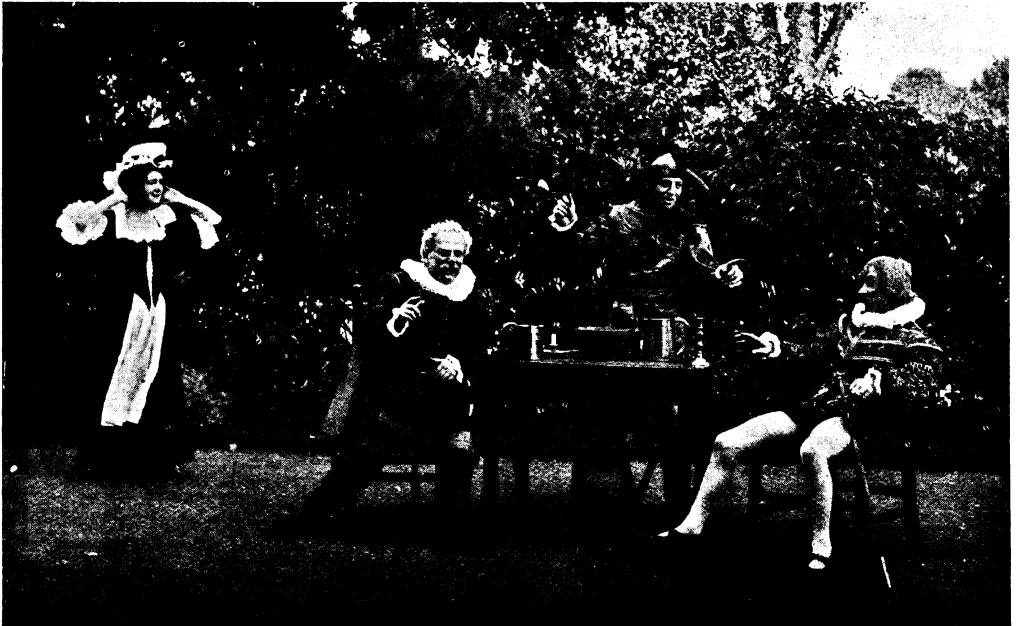
and when the work of correspondence and organisation had outgrown individual effort, Miss Morritt, five years ago, secured the invaluable co-operation of Mr. Acton Bond. Under their joint supervision the Society has extended its branches in all directions, until it has local honorary secretaries in close upon thirty different towns within the British Isles, "from John 'o Groats to Land's End," as well as in Ireland, besides some ten in British Colonies, among the last-named being



OLIVIA, THE CLOWN, AND MALVOLIO: MRS. DOUGLAS BARLOW, MR. BARLOW, AND MR. G. H. HOLLOWAY.

the towns of Victoria and Kelowna, in British Columbia, Demerara, in British Guiana, Wellington, New Zealand, and Johannesburg, South Africa. Moreover, the work

radiating from most of these local centres includes a number of subdivisions in the shape of "Reading Circles," formed for the carrying out of the work of the Society in



MARIA, SIR TOBY, THE CLOWN, AND SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK: MISS NICHOLSON, MR. URWICK, MR. BARLOW, AND MR. BLAKEWAY.

*Two photographs by McNeill, Stratford-on-Avon*

the cause of Shakespearean study and research. Thus, under the Sheffield branch are grouped no fewer than eleven sub-organisations covering different districts, each with its own local chairman and secretary. Edinburgh has four similarly distributed branches, and London at present has seven.

#### OBJECTS AND METHODS.

The objects of the Society are—

1. To promote greater familiarity with Shakespeare's works among all classes throughout the British Empire by means of closer study of the text of the plays, with a view to the clearer understanding of them, not only by means of individual reading in the library, but by the collective effects of reading aloud in dramatic form, with separate representatives for the various characters of each play. As the late Sir Theodore Martin



*Photo by]*

*[Lallie Charles.*

MR. ACTON BOND.

*Hon. General Director of the Society.*



*Photo by]*

*[Walter Barnett.*

MISS GRETA MORRITT AS MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS, AT THE STRATFORD-ON-AVON FESTIVAL COSTUME BALL.

*Foundress and Hon. General Director of the Society.*

urged, the reading aloud of Shakespeare is, perhaps, the best way in which the spirit of Shakespeare can be truly preserved in these days, because the people who read study not only their own parts, but the play as a whole. It is extremely useful, too, in calling attention to the beauty of Shakespeare's language, which is at once the most varied and the most uniformly excellent of any author in any tongue. It is the rule of the Society to organise dramatic readings and acted scenes from Shakespeare's plays as often as possible, and lectures on his life and works.

2. To help the rising generation not only to study Shakespeare's works, but to love them. Special classes for children are held with a view to enabling them to make their early acquaintance with our greatest poet's work as interesting as possible. As the Bishop of Bristol said the other day, all children should be brought up with a knowledge and love of

Shakespeare; it was the bringing-up he himself had had, and he never regretted that it should have been so. Fortunately, a good many modern parents are entirely agreed with that opinion.

3. To encourage the study of Shakespeare by prizes given yearly for the best reading, recitation, and acting of scenes from his plays, and similar awards for essays on Shakespearean themes by members or associates of the Society.

4. The Society arranges to give private dramatic readings of any Shakespearean play at colleges, institutions, or private houses, and one particularly desirable outcome of this part of its scheme has been the repetition of both readings and dramatic performances of the plays for the benefit of the less educated audiences of village communities and philanthropic institutions in great cities. Thus, such centres as the Oxford House Settlement at Bethnal Green, and the Passmore Edwards Settlement in Bloomsbury, have had the benefit of frequent dramatic readings by highly trained performers in a cast headed by professional players of notable elocutionary accomplishment, and country members frequently give readings and performances for the benefit of their less educated neighbours. In certain districts, notably at Martley, near Malvern, villagers themselves take an active part, not

only in readings, but in elaborately rehearsed performances of Shakespearean plays. This last-named development may be considered one of the most important, the actors being inspired with an enthusiasm for subject-matter far more valuable in the beauty of its language and thought than has usually been associated with the only rustic entertainments which have survived the passing of the older folk-drama.

#### MEMBERSHIP.

Membership of the Society is open both to adults and children. The annual subscription for members is 5s., the entrance fee being 5s. A donation of £5 constitutes life membership; £2 2s. membership for eight years. Members take precedence of other subscribers in the position of seats, and may bring a friend to the majority of meetings.

Associates pay an entrance fee of 2s. 6d.; annual subscription, 2s. 6d., institutional associates (*i.e.*, twelve or more persons from an institu-

tion), entrance fee, 2s. 6d.; annual subscription, 1s. 6d. Associates have the right to attend all meetings, but they are not entitled to the first claim on seats, nor have they the right to bring visitors without extra payment.

For children under sixteen the annual subscription is 1s. On attaining the age of sixteen, they become associates, and may become members on payment of associates' entrance fee of 2s. 6d.



*Photo by)*

*(Lafayette, New Bond Street.*

H.H. PRINCESS MARIE LOUISE OF SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN.

*President of the Society.*





MALVOLIO IN THE GARDEN: MR. P. L. EYRE.

## ADMINISTRATION.

1. The administration and general management of the Society is governed by (a) the president, (b) the vice-presidents, (c) the hon. secretary, (d) the hon. treasurer, who compose the council of the Society.

2. Meetings of the council are called, when deemed necessary, by the president, vice-presidents, hon. secretary, or hon. treasurer.

As president, Her Highness Princess Marie Louise of Schleswig-Holstein has constantly shown her interest in the Society, and has been present at meetings on many occasions both in London and at country centres. Within the past two years, she not only distributed the prizes awarded at the essay and elocution competitions, but also presented a charming piece of her own enamel-work to the first-prize winner in the ladies' elocution class.

The general rules of the Society are :—

1. A local branch of the Society may be formed in any town where ten persons join as either members or associates.

2. Each branch of the Society sends an annual report of work done to the hon. secretary.

3. All branches must admit the press free, and the public at a small charge, to at least one meeting each year.

4. The tribute from suburban branches to the parent organisation is 25 per cent. of donations, entrance fees, and subscriptions; from provincial branches, 10 per cent.; and from colonial branches, 2½ per cent. This entitles members generally, in addition to other advantages, to be present without charge at all the London meetings, and take part in all competitions without entrance fee.



BEATRICE AND BENEDICK: MISS EVE TAME (MRS. ACTON BOND) AND MR. P. L. EYRE.

*Two photographs by McNeill, Stratford-on-Avon.*



Photo by]

[McNeill, Stratford-on-Avon.

BENEDICK AND BEATRICE: MR. G. H. HOLLOWAY AND MRS. DOUGLAS BARLOW.

5. Each branch has the right to be represented by two delegates at the annual general conference.

The Society has had the sympathy and help, from its first stages onward, of many leaders of modern education and social progress, some of whom have contributed valuable lectures for the large audiences which the Society has assembled. Thus, the Bishop of Ripon has taken the stage at a *matinée* in a crowded theatre, and given a notably illuminating address on "The Study of Shakespeare," the Bishop of Bristol has addressed a large gathering of the Society's members and friends, and both have taken part in the reading of plays by local "circles," as have also the Bishop of Knaresborough and the Bishop of Richmond. Canon Talbot has lectured on "Macbeth," and Canon

Beeching, Professor Boas, Professor Dowden, Sir Oliver Lodge, Mr. Henry Arthur Jones, Major-General Sir R. S. Baden-Powell, Lord Strathcona, and other distinguished public men have addressed meetings.

The vice-presidents of the Society, too, have constantly contributed support in various ways, the actor-managers, Mr. George Alexander, Mr. Lewis Waller, Mr. Arthur Bouchier, Mr. H. B. Irving, and Mr. Forbes-Robertson, by lending their theatres for the public readings of the Society, and by taking part in those readings themselves, and the three last-named have also given interesting lectures. And Lord Howard de Walden, Mr. W. L. Courtney, Sir Charles Mathews, and Mr. Alan Mackinnon, have rendered valuable help to the Society's organisation and development. Many of our leading

actors have likewise given the movement hearty support by consenting to add to the interest of its readings by taking a part in them, and eloquent lectures have been given at various branches by Mr. F. R. Benson—on "Shakespeare and the Fuller Life of the People"—Mr. Martin Harvey, and other distinguished players. But such "star" features of the programme might conceivably have been planned by some local committee, had the demand on the part of occasional audiences been sufficient, and it is therefore more particularly to the entirely amateur efforts of the Society's members that value must be attached.

Those efforts, as we have seen, are to a very remarkable degree extending the literary study of the noblest models of diction and thought in our language by means of lectures and dramatic readings, private and public, and essay competitions, and the necessary preparation for them. The amount of enthusiasm and concentrated work shown by the large number of essays sent in for competition would compare very favourably with the perfunctory essay work of public school or even university authorship. The Society is also encouraging the improvement of elocutionary skill among the younger generations of all classes, and is carrying out Matthew Arnold's precept by "organising" the amateur theatre with constant performances of plays all too frequently excluded from the modern stage by frivolity and banality. No one who has seen the annual performances at the Memorial Theatre, Strat-

ford-on-Avon, given by members of the Society, drawn from the best players of branches all over the United Kingdom, will need reassurance as to the merits of the productions artistically stage-managed by Mr. Acton Bond, whose experience of the stage, gained as an actor in the companies of Sir Henry Irving and other leading managers, has given him the right judgment for the conducting of rehearsals, not only for performances, but for the dramatic

readings which are constantly being rehearsed all over the country. It is that work of training and preparation which most differentiates the dramatic readings of the Society from the old unorganised and unrehearsed effects of other amateur readers. The readings and performances of local branches show much accomplishment, and the annual productions at Stratford give the audience the rare experience of seeing two totally different casts of players present the same play, at two consecutive performances, one of the most interesting studies in criticism that a modern playgoer can know,

and one that no professional company has ever been in a position to give him.

It has sometimes been urged against the present-day importance given to amateur dramatics of all kinds, that they are merely developing histrionic talents to an extent which but increases the ranks of the "stage-struck," and so swells the numbers of the unemployed of the professional stage. The criticism may, perhaps, apply to excess of

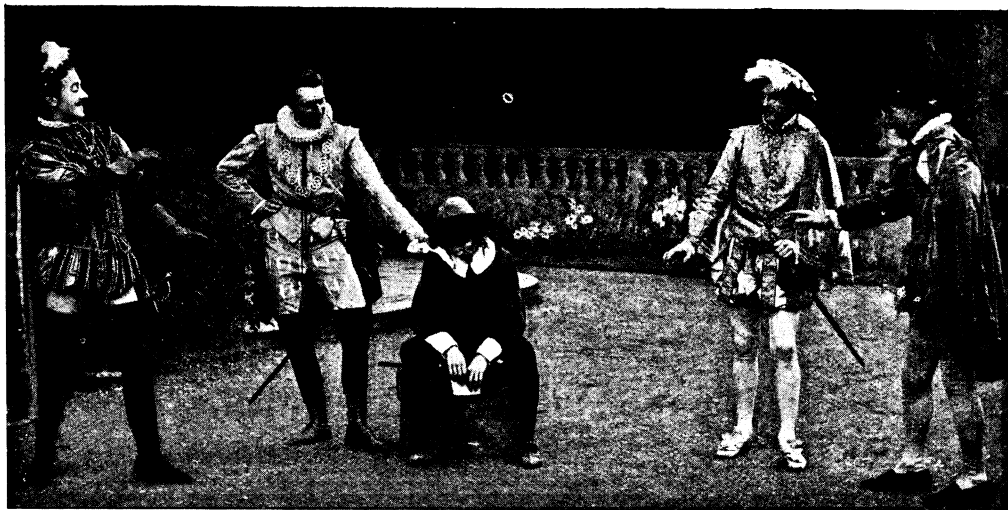


*Photo by*

MR. A. D. FLOWER,

*[Elliott & Fry.]*

*Chairman of the Trustees of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-on-Avon, who has taken an active interest in the work of the Society.*



GRATIANO (MR. HOLLOWAY), LORENZO (MR. SPENSER FLOWER), LAUNCELOT GOBBO (MR. MACHON),  
SALARINO (MR. PERCY), AND SALANIO (REV. CORNWELL ROBERTSON).

amateur enthusiasm in clubs and societies which are entirely theatrical in their work and their ambitions, but of the far-reaching organisation known to the public as "The British Empire Shakespeare Society," and to its members affectionately as "The Bess," it is safe to say that Shakespearean enthusiasm generally has from the first been the predominant motive—that is to say, the literary and dramatic interest, in the largest

sense, rather than the thirst for histrionic triumphs only. A love of Shakespeare, and the desire to impersonate his characters, has drawn on to the professional stage many ambitious young men and women of literary tastes, who have found, to their disappointment, that they must eventually make a living out of far different forms of dramatic entertainment. For such, the real and frequent work of the British Empire Shakespeare



THE CASKET SCENE FROM "THE MERCHANT OF VENICE."

*Two photographs by Gra'hm, Leamington.*



*Photo by]*

*[McNeill, Stratford-on-Avon.*

DOGBERRY AND VERGES: MR. WATKINS AND MR. HOLLOWAY.

Society, and the high standard of intelligence, elocutionary skill, and literary sympathy established and maintained by its workers, now afford quite sufficient opportunities of expression, without the sacrifice of all other forms of career which the professional stage demands of its servants.

This, in brief, is the story of the origin and growth, within the past eight years, of a remarkably far-reaching organisation, of which one great advantage is that it brings together members of different social classes which have stood too long apart, and develops

in them a pride in their federation, while giving them also a passport into all circles of the Society other than their own.

The further development of so strong and so spirited a corporation must be watched with the utmost interest by all who realise that Shakespeare's legacy to his country is to-day one of that country's greatest national assets. The vitality of the Society has already accomplished much; with the membership of over ten thousand to which it has now attained, it seems likely to achieve yet more.

# PHILOSOPHY AND CUPID.

By ETHEL KEIGHTLEY.



“WHAT are you thinking of?” he asked.

She had been silent for some time, leaning back in a chair, her eyes fixed on the garden before them.

“I am watching the bees,” she

replied, “and admiring their marvellous power of concentration.”

“I don’t consider that that quality is anything to their credit,” said he, with a touch of impatience. “They have only one object in life and no other interests to distract them.”

“To be purposeful in one direction is better than a life made up of fragmentary interests that lead nowhere,” she remarked tersely.

He blew a cloud of cigarette smoke before replying.

“You would think more of the person who has a definite object in life than of one who lives simply for the moment?” he asked.

“It is an insult to one’s intelligence to live solely for the present moment,” she answered scornfully.

“But we are commanded to take no thought for the morrow,” he ventured, in the uneasy way in which a man always refers to a sacred subject, but with no irreverence.

“That command would not be so generally misunderstood if people paid more attention to the context.”

“How do you interpret it?” he asked gravely.

“I think it is only the possible mischances of to-morrow that we are forbidden to look forward to. There would be an end to progress if the general good of humanity were not taken thought of for a countless succession of to-morrows.”

“Yes, I suppose so,” he answered vaguely, lighting another cigarette.

“That is what the unending industry of the bee amounts to—building, storing, and

organising for the benefit of future generations.”

“You have been reading Maeterlinck,” said he quizzically.

“Yes, I have,” she admitted, laughing. “Isn’t it annoying that one cannot see things and enjoy them just for what they are without being reminded of what someone has written about them.”

“The educated being is doomed to see and think through the medium of association. Women do so more than men,” he added.

“Yes . . . perhaps they do,” she said thoughtfully. “Do you know, I sometimes envy men their rational outlook on life. I have seen Hobbs, the gardener, go forth armed with destruction, in the shape of a large bag of salt, to slay armies of slugs in a single night. Without a pang of conscience, whilst I shudder at the thought of the slaughter of the innocents.”

“But you would be more distressed if Hobbs had scruples about killing slugs and earwigs, and allowed them to destroy your garden.”

“Of course I should,” she agreed, with the inconsequence of woman. “I suppose the quality of my mercy is tempered by love for my garden.”

“Do you care for your garden for its own sake,” he asked sententiously, “or have gardens in general assumed an additional charm since ‘Elizabeth’ broke into literary rhapsodies over her German one?”

“No, no, indeed!” she exclaimed, turning to him; “I love it entirely for its beauty, its restfulness. I love it as a place to dream in—the impossible dreams that I suppose all women indulge in,” she added, with a smile.

“And men, too, sometimes,” he murmured, gazing into the branches of the sycamore overhead.

“Thoughts, ideas, come to one in a garden that never come anywhere else,” she continued, ignoring his remark.

“But it requires the genius of an Amiel to express them,” said he, still gazing upwards.

She smiled. “I thought you did not



care for Amiel, or philosophers of that school?"

"No, I don't; the philosophy of the breakfast-table is quite sufficient for me."

"But surely the breakfast-table is stony ground, that can only yield weeds in the way of philosophy?"

"I grant that it may sometimes be the product of wild oats in a distilled form—sown overnight," said he, and his eyes twinkled.

"I should say that it invariably is," she laughed. "The ordinary healthy individual is too intent on coffee and eggs to indulge in philosophy."

"The ordinary healthy individual never indulges in it," he declared. "It is the refuge of those who grope for hypothetical happiness, instead of taking what is within their grasp."

I wonder whether I am letting happiness pass by whilst I grope for it, she thought.

"I suppose it is foolish to have ideals?" she said thoughtfully.

"Only when they are unnecessary and disconcerting," he replied.

"How do you mean?" she asked.

"Well . . . for instance . . . suppose a man, just an ordinary everyday kind of individual, fond of shooting, fishing, hunting, and all that sort of thing, and suppose that circumstances have made it possible for him to do pretty well what he likes. We will suppose . . . for the sake of argument . . . that this man loves a woman, loves her with all his heart and soul and mind . . . but because he knows that the woman has ideals, and looks upon a man who has done nothing remarkable as a parasite living on the wealth accumulated by his forebears, he dare not tell her that he loves her."

"Then the knowledge has awakened the man to the fact that he is an energetic idler."

"It evidently has," he replied, in an impersonal tone. "He is the epitome of idleness; but hitherto he has never had any incentive to be otherwise."

"I consider that the woman has achieved something already," she remarked dreamily—some white butterflies hovering over a bed of crimson phlox seemed to interest her.

"I suppose an acknowledgment of his shortcomings, and a determination to do better things in the future, would not justify his asking her to marry him?" he inquired tentatively.

"I think not . . . If she accepted him . . . it would only encourage him to procrastinate."

He sighed deeply, and getting up, walked the length of the gravel path and back.

"Then there is nothing for it but to set to work and do something," he said dolefully, sitting down again.

"I suppose, if the man is really in earnest, that would be the best thing for him to do," she replied, stifling a smile.

"Oh, he is in earnest right enough; but the question that is troubling him is, what is he to do?"

"That should not be difficult to discover; everything is open to a man," she said decisively.

"But hitherto it has only been the clubs and his friends' houses, so he is rather at a loss to discover an entrance to his new realm of investigation. What should you advise?"

"I? Why do you ask me? I am not interested in what he does."

"I thought, perhaps, you might be," he said, with a sigh of disappointment.

There was a moment's silence while they both watched the white butterflies dancing over the vivid crimson flowers. Then he said dejectedly—

"I am afraid there is no use in his attempting to distinguish himself, after all."

"Oh, yes, I think there is," she exclaimed, with more interest than she had shown hitherto. His face brightened. He straightened his back, squared his shoulders, and thrust his hands deep into the pockets of his coat. She turned to him inquiringly. "What can *you* suggest?" she asked, smiling. He knit his brows thoughtfully.

"You see, I—I mean he has never shown any literary talent; he couldn't contribute a single leaf to the Vallombrosa of the book-stalls."

"Then literature is out of the question," she said.

"I am afraid so."

He thought diligently again before continuing.

"As he has always pursued his ignominious pastimes on horseback or on foot, he feels a certain amount of security in remaining here below, otherwise he might join the noble army of aeronauts, and soar with them above a common bound; break their records—or his neck in the attempt."

"There is always a chance of success. But surely there are other ways of soaring above a common bound in a less literal sense?"

"There isn't even a chance of distinguishing oneself as a Territorial in these piping times of peace. By the way, why are times of peace usually described as 'piping'?"



“‘I did call you . . . but not aloud.’”

"Perhaps to signify pastoral contentment," she ventured.

"A term now fallen into disuse on account of the present Budget," he commented.

"I have it!" she cried, with sudden animation. "He might go in for politics."

"Never had any inclination that way," said he, shaking his head.

"It seems that the only solution of the difficulty would be for him to attempt something quite out of the beaten track, or . . . try to invent something."

"I'm afraid he will always be among the 'also rans' in whatever he undertakes," said he gloomily. Presently he rose and throwing away his cigarette end, held out his hand.

"Good-bye," he said shortly.

"Must you go?" she asked, and there was a ring of sincerity in the polite figure of speech.

"Yes," he returned, avoiding her eyes. "I must get back at once; I shall have a lot to do before I go."

She rose to her feet and asked in a dazed voice—

"Are you going away?"

"Yes, I shall leave on Saturday for Mombasa—at least, I shall land there, and go inland after big game."

The colour slowly left her face, but he could not have noticed it because he was not looking at her.

"Big game . . . that means?"

"Lions principally."

"Oh!" she exclaimed, with a little gasp. "Have you—have you ever shot wild animals before?"

"No," he answered, suppressing a smile.

"Is it very dangerous sport?" she managed to ask steadily.

"Very," he replied, with the indifference of a fatalist. She kept her composure with an effort.

"I hope you will have a very good time," she said, holding out her hand. Good-bye . . . and . . . good luck."

"Good-bye," he repeated, taking her hand

for a moment. Then he turned away and walked towards the garden gate. He was about to open it, when a sound caught his ear. It might have been someone on the road outside, or it might have been someone speaking in the house, but it sounded suspiciously like a sob. He paused and listened, and heard it again, unmistakably this time. It came from under the sycamore. He turned and made his way noiselessly over the grass towards the girl, who was standing with her back to him. He noticed that the slight figure drooped pathetically.

"Did you speak?" he asked softly. There was no reply.

"I beg your pardon . . . I thought you called me."

Suddenly she turned a white, tear-wet face to him, and in a moment she was in his arms.

"I did call you . . . but not aloud," she said tremulously.

"Do you wish me to stay?" he whispered.

"Yes . . . yes," came the answer from the regions of his necktie; it was a new tie, and tear-stains were marring its beauty considerably. He bent down and kissed the soft hair that was coiled in a thick plait round the small head.

"Sweetheart, will you take me as I am?" he murmured.

For answer she raised her face to his, and he kissed the still quivering lips.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Does philosophy teach any greater happiness than this?" he asked a few minutes later.

"A woman only takes refuge in philosophy when she is in doubt," she smiled.

"I see . . . when in doubt, try Plato."

Then they talked of other things until the garden was wrapped in twilight. The colour faded from the bed of crimson phlox, and the white butterflies betook themselves to the kitchen garden to seek the homely shelter of the cabbage leaves.

They have decided not to spend their honeymoon at Mombasa.



# A RECORD ROUND.

By FRED M. WHITE.



HE old fakir held out an arm picturesquely dingy with the dirt of many wanderings. On the stringy muscles stood a pink and angry lump, where the skimming "Colonel" had made compact with

his holy flesh. Altamount was moved only to passion.

"Serve you right, you filthy old rascal!" he roared. "You were right in line with the hole. Why didn't you clear out when the boy called you?"

The fakir drew himself up rigidly. Two electric points of fire seemed to dazzle in his weary old eyes. He muttered shibboleths the while, only adding to Altamount's rage.

"Look at the old blackguard!" he spluttered to the Commissioner. "Cursing me by his tin gods, I suppose. Why do they allow such cattle to stray about the finest golf links in India? I've a good mind to have the ruffian flogged. Hang me, if I don't have him flogged if he spoils my round! Do you hear that, you rascal? If I don't put in a record round to-day, I'll have you flogged! What is the record of the course, Challoner?"

Challoner replied curtly that the record was 69, made by an Olympian travelling overland home from Australia. Challoner was a bit of a radical in racial matters, and deeply versed in the lore of the East. He was a little disgusted at Altamount's outbreak, especially as the latter's drive at the first hole had lost little distance by the accident. The fakir smiled in a dry way, with a smile like that of a face which is seen shimmering behind a haze. He took from his rags a scrap of papyrus and a stump of red pencil looted from somewhere. On the papyrus he drew two figures roughly — 68 — and handed the paper to Altamount. The flickering smile was on his face still, the needle points of wrath in the pupils of his eyes.

"It is no new thing to me, sahib," he said

—"no new thing, this game of the long shaft and the little ball. Three hundred years ago even here they played it. Me, Rana Sani, who cannot die till the curse is worked out, saw them — short men with breeches such as the sahibs wear, only larger, and hats sloping like the peak of Pindi yonder. Oh, yes!"

"What is the maundering old fool talking about?" Altamount asked impatiently.

"He is telling you something like the truth," Commissioner Challoner said gravely. The old fakir had passed on towards the jungle grass with his head buried in his beard. "There is little doubt that the Dutch played a species of golf here three centuries ago. Funny how history repeats itself. Do I believe the old chap saw it? Well, frankly, I don't know. 'There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio.' Shakespeare must have had the purple East in his mind when he said that. I'm a student of the cult, you know. Sometimes I get up against things that fairly frighten me. . . . Come along. And don't—don't despise that talisman. It's going to give you a record round."

Altamount laughed scornfully. After all said and done, his ball lay in an excellent lie, though not quite so close to the first hole as Challoner's. It was just possible to reach the green with a full mashie shot. Altamount gripped his club with a certain nervous confidence. He seemed to feel that his stance was correct. The ball described a perfect parabola, and, landing on the edge of the green, tricked up to the lip of the hole. It was a good shot for the striker's medal round. Challoner gravely recorded a 3 on his partner's card.

"On the top of your game to-day," he said. "That's a bit too good for a five-handicap man."

Altamount replied that he did not feel in the least fit; on the contrary, he was shaky and nervous. He nearly as possible topped his next tee shot, but not quite, so that the consequence was a long, fine, raking ball, quite a professional shot, in fact. It was a long hole, a 6 bogey, but Altamount was on the green with his third shot holing a long putt

for a perfect 4. It was a fine effort altogether, and the Commissioner remarked gravely that the spell was working. Altamount did not even swagger, a habit of his that did not specially endear him to the members of the Kalpore Club; on the contrary, he looked white and shaken. He was feeling the confounded heat, he said. But for the fact that they were playing a medal round, he was disposed to chuck the game altogether.

"And yet I'm playing the game of my life," he muttered. "That old fakir seems to have brought me luck. Of course, that papyrus was all rot. By Jove, that's a long drive!"

It was a beautiful, long drive, a superlative effort quite. Altamount grinned in spite of himself. There were two holes here—the sixth and the seventh—that always spoilt his round. But he negotiated the two in seven strokes, bringing off marvellous putts at each green.

"Naylor did this hole the day he made his 69 in 2," the Commissioner remarked, as they stood on the ninth tee. "Took a cleek for his drive, and played for the run over the shoulder of the hill. Better try it, as you are doing so remarkably well."

"So I will," Altamount said recklessly. "Give me the cleek, boy. A very low tee."

The cleek came through with a rushing sweep, and the ball flew straight and true for the angle of the hill. It hung just for a moment, and tricked over the sloping green close to the pin. Altamount laughed, but there was no triumph in his laugh. Challoner totalled up the score for the outward journey.

"3, 4, 5, 4, 5, 4, 3, 4, 2—total 34," he said. "Nothing like it has been done on the Kalpore links before. Naylor's score for the outward half was 35. And, so far as I can see, there is not a semblance of a fluke in it at all. I should like to make you a large bet that you will not do the homeward journey in the same score. But the thing is impossible."

"No, it isn't," Altamount burst out. "You may laugh at me, if you like, and say that I am swaggering, but I feel certain that I shall repeat my performance home. And yet I feel shaky and jumpy as a 'sub' before his first mess dinner. A fiver I get home in 34!"

Challoner accepted the bet with a mental reservation that the discipline would be good for Altamount. It was annoying, therefore, as hole after hole reeled off, to realise that the discipline was not there, and that the

Commissioner was going to lose five pounds which he could ill afford. Eight holes produced a score of 30, but the last hole was an exceedingly difficult 5, and there was hope yet. Surely, in his eagerness, Altamount would spoil this. He was looking very white and shaky; there was an ominous quivering of the muscles of his mouth as he took his driver.

"Play short and make a possible chance of it," Challoner suggested, in a fine sportsman's spirit. "There are only two men in the club who can carry that bunker. If you get in it, you lose your money for a certainty; whereas, if you are just short, why——"

"As if I didn't know that," Altamount responded. "I tell you I'm going for it. I know it's a good hundred and sixty yards' carry, but I shall get there to-day. Tee it low, boy."

It seemed to Challoner that Altamount snatched at his ball in a jerky sort of way. The ball was half topped, too, but it was exactly what was necessary. The new "Colonel" flew straight as an arrow well over the other side of the bunker, and a rasping second laid it on the green. A long putt lipped the hole, and Altamount was down in 4, giving him a record of 68 for the course. It was a fine performance from first to last, and without the semblance of a fluke in it. And not the least remarkable part of the whole thing was that Altamount showed not the slightest inclination to swagger. The fact would go to the golfing world; it would be recorded in the sporting papers; from St. Andrews to Melbourne men would talk of this wonderful thing. The committee would assuredly bring Altamount down to scratch, which was a calamity that all good Kalporites prayed against steadily. And yet the hero of the affair hardly smiled. He thoughtfully placed three balls on a spare tee by the side of the last green, and drove them in the direction of the club-house. They were execrable shots, that any 18-handicap man might well have been ashamed of.

"Overstrung," Challoner murmured in sympathy. "Funny thing how often one goes to pieces after a really tight round is finished. Let me congratulate you, old chap."

Altamount took his honours with amazing meekness. In the club-house he allowed Challoner to tell the story of his prowess; his modesty was phenomenal. Plainly, it was his duty to gather all the club-house about him and tell step by step, Homerically,



"The man of iron nerve drove a perfectly straight long ball, and then, to the surprise of the gallery, Altamont outdrove Hassall."



how the thing was done. That is the penalty which the mediocrity pays for golfing greatness. But Altamount did none of these things.

"I'm ill," he said. "I feel so sick, so dreadfully faint, so sure that something awful is going to happen. It all seems like a dream to me. Bring me a large brandy peg, waiter, and not much soda. Put those balls in your pocket, Hicks; the sight of them makes me shudder. Think I'll turn in for a spell."

"Well, there's one thing certain," remarked a scratch player jealously; "he'll never do it again. These perfectly amazing flukes come off sometimes. As a matter of fact, I'm Altamount's partner in the Regency Cup to-morrow, and I shall keep a close eye on him."

Members present grinned. Hassall was a martinet in the game, also a gambler. Most listeners hoped that Hassall would spoil this particular Egyptian. After his performance to-day, Altamount could do no less than play Hassall for his usual pound per hole and a fiver on the match. There would be fine sport for the gallery on the morrow.

Altamount turned up for his match looking terribly ill and shaky, so ill, indeed, as to gain what his clubmates had never expended on him before—sympathy. He was very sick, he explained; also, he had not been able to sleep a wink all night. Only the iconoclastic Hassall refused to recognise anything but the exigencies of the game. He made his offer of a pound a hole, and Altamount snarled an affirmative.

"Make it two, if you like," he said. "I'm more fit for bed than anything else, but I'm going to give you a proper beating to-day. Two pounds per hole and ten on the match, and the same on the bye, if you like. Is that good enough for you?"

Hassall grinned that it was so. His was the lower handicap, so the honour was his. The man of iron nerve drove a perfectly straight long ball, and then, to the surprise of the gallery, Altamount outdrove Hassall. Somebody muttered that there was a chance for a half in 4. Altamount smiled as he announced his intention of doing the hole in three. Hassall snapped at him with the offer of a fiver against it, and Altamount nodded. He proceeded to lay his next shot on the lip of the hole, and won in 3 to 4.

His face was deadly pale now, great drops passed off his forehead. With something like a snarl, he turned to Hassall, whose light operatic whistle was woefully out of tune.

"You love a bet," he said. "Well, I'll make you a sporting one. A fiver each that I do the next four holes in 4, 5, 4, 5 respectively. No money to be paid unless I do all the holes in the exact score that I mention. If I do, you pay me twenty pounds. Are you on?"

Hassall nodded with the air of a man who feels that he is decidedly favoured by fortune. But the stolid Scotchman's face fell as Altamount reeled off the 4, 5, 4, 5, as he had forecast, without the shadow of a fluke or the semblance of a mistake. From the point of view of fine golf, it was perfect—long, raking drives, perfect brassie strokes, and equally perfect approaches, followed by putts of deadly accuracy. Challoner, who followed silently behind, grew grave. He could see something hidden from the crowd of excited golfers. Hassall was only alive to the fact that he was 3 down at the fifth hole, and that he had lost twenty-six pounds. With a quivering lip and a ghastly, twitching eye, Altamount announced that he was prepared to nominate his score for the next four holes for money—a most absurd thing to do, as everybody there knew. And yet there were no takers of the tempting offer, Hassall grunting that this was his unlucky day.

"Isn't there one of you who has pluck enough to take an offer like that?" Altamount snarled. "Come, isn't there one of you who will bet me twenty pounds that I don't do the last four holes of the outward round in 4, 3, 4, and 2 respectively. No takers, eh?"

But Hassall shook his head. He played his own steady game, doing wonderfully well, with a very few mistakes; but then, on the other hand, Altamount was making no mistakes at all.

"Never saw anything like it in my life," he said to a neighbour. "Altamount only wants two more 4's to equal his score of yesterday. But he is not likely to get the eighteenth score with this gentle breeze against him. Ah, that was a fine drive!"

"Can't make a mistake!" Altamount yelled. "I should have done it with the putter. A million to one I get a 4 here and equal my score of yesterday!"

It was even as the speaker said. A brassie laid him on the green, and two putts completed the hole. For the second afternoon in succession, Altamount had equalled the score of the links. He burst through the knot of yelling partners, and fled as if possessed to the club-house. He glanced furtively over his shoulder to see if he were

pursued. The crowd would have dragged him back and plied him with many pegs, but Altamount was not to be found. It was certain that he had not returned to his own quarters. The only man who mastered his coolness was Challoner.

"A touch of sunstroke," he suggested, "and the excitement has done the rest. Altamount has gone somewhere where he can be quiet for a turn, and it will be a kindness of you fellows to leave him alone. No wonder the poor chap is upset after two such rounds."

Challoner's words were words of wisdom, and the clamour gradually subsided. He walked thoughtfully home a little before dinner. A native was waiting in his compound with a note for him. He recognised Altamount's handwriting, shaky and sprawling as it was. It was only a short note.

"I am at Belcher's," it ran, "keeping out of the way. Belcher is away from home. For Heaven's sake, come over and see me as soon as you can! This thing is killing me!"

"Tell the Captain Sahib I will come to-night," Challoner said quietly.

But Challoner had his journey for his pains. The Captain Sahib had dined at the bungalow of Belcher Sahib, so the butler said, but after that he had departed hurriedly for Kamadi, saying that he would be there for a few days. With the knowledge of the East full in his eyes, Challoner decided to wait. He could guess pretty well what had happened, though he said nothing to anyone; nobody would have believed him. It was soon after daybreak on the fifth day that he was disturbed by the presence of Altamount in his bedroom. The latter looked brown and lean and scraggy, and there was a wild gleam in his eyes, a nervous plucking of the fingers that suggested a man on the verge of delirium tremens.

"It isn't that," Altamount muttered, as he followed Challoner's inquiring gaze. "I am prepared to swear that I haven't touched a peg for a week. It isn't that—it isn't that!"

Altamount fell into a chair and rocked himself in a slow abandonment of grief.

"I couldn't stand it," he said. "It was bad enough when I beat you, but after I did Hassall down, there was a feeling like death at my heart. . . . A cold sweat and the presence of some unseen thing behind me. I could feel it gripping my hands as I held the clubs. If I had told the other chaps, they would simply have laughed at me. You can imagine the hoary old chaff, and I going mad all the time!"

"You made a pretty good fight for it, all the same," Challoner said quietly.

"Of course I did," Altamount went on, in the same vague, distant way. "I meant to tell you because I felt sure that you would understand; then I changed my mind, and went off to Kamadi. If the same thing happened there, I knew that the cursed thing had mastered me. I couldn't give up the game; it seemed so cowardly. . . . There were very few people at Kamadi, and I played three times a day—not with anybody, mind you, because that would have given the whole thing away. I went alone, for the most part without a caddie. And played! Jove, what a game I played!"

The speaker paused and wiped his damp forehead. It was no cue of Challoner's to interrupt.

"But *you* can guess—you know. I started the first morning at daybreak. Guess what my round was?"

"Sixty-eight," Challoner said softly. "This is a most interesting case, by far the most——"

"Quite so. Now, doesn't it strike you as being something more than a coincidence? Listen! My hole scores on both occasions were 3, 4, 5, 4, 5, 4, 3, 4, 2 out, and 3, 4, 3, 4, 5, 3, 4, 4, 4 home. Heaven knows, I can repeat that from memory fast enough! The thing was on my nerves. It came to me that I should go on doing the same thing all my life. Think of it, man, the maddening monotony of it! Impelled by some hidden fate to play a game I loathe, doomed to play the same score in every hole for evermore! No mind could stand the strain; gradually one would grow mad, and take one's own life. Something said that that was what the old fakir had done for me! The second night I could not close my eyes. . . . I started to play at Kamadi as soon as I could see. Challoner, I went round in 68! I played every hole with exactly the same score that I played here; for the life of me, I couldn't vary it. I tried to make 4's into 5's, and 5's into 4's, but all to no purpose. There was no possibility of making any mistake. For five days I have been playing two and three rounds a day at Kamadi, with the same result. You may say: Give the game up. I can't! I am impelled to go on and try and break the spell. If I admit failure, I feel that my brain will give way. And I can't possibly go on playing alone. See how solitude increases the torture. On the other hand, look at the result of my making matches."

"You've made a pretty big reputation, anyway," said Challoner.

"Well, I'm not afraid of *that*. So far as that goes, I could tour the world and win everything. I should be *fêted* and flattered; my style could be copied everywhere. And the discovery would be made at once that I always did a round in 68. This would be followed by the further discovery that I also do every particular hole on a certain number of strokes. And the thing is absolutely true. It's the curse laid upon me for interfering with the fakir. When I think of what I have to go through, I could yell and dance and tear my hair. I sat up all last night and thought of my razors. But I daren't do it, Challoner; there's a little girl waiting for me in England. . . . Could you find the old rascal for me?"

"I dare say," Challoner said. "You see, I am pretty friendly with all the wandering vagabonds who come this way. I can speak their language, there is always a handful of rice for them at my bungalow, and in return they tell me many things. I can trace your old man of the sea, beyond doubt. You think that——"

"That it may be possible to propitiate him. Yes, I was foolish to lose my temper. It seems wildly ridiculous to a Western mind, but I should like to see the old man muttering some shibboleth over that scrap of papyrus, and destroying the spell. I was going to chuck that piece of papyrus away, but after my experience with Hassall, I decided to keep it. . . . Try to find the man, old chap."

"I will. I will set the ball rolling to-morrow. Is that all you want?"

"Pretty well. There's just one more thing. I dare say you will laugh at me. Perhaps, after all, I have been merely overcome with something that gives me absolute accuracy, but I am going to make certain. Both of us know the links pretty well, don't we?"

"Walk round in the dark," Challoner said, "and never make a mistake."

"Well, I am going to play round them in the dark. At any rate, you are going to accompany me whilst I play a game in the pitch darkness. All we shall want is a box of vestas to locate the exact spot where the ball lies. We shall walk it up without the smallest difficulty. And if we do find the ball as easily as I expect, why, the sooner the fakir is unearthed the better."

"You can count on me," said Challoner. "Really, this is the most interesting experiment—— I beg your pardon, old chap. And

now I'll go and make a few inquiries as to the whereabouts of the fakir."

Altamount wrung Challoner's hand in silence. There was a more hopeful expression on his face now, but the twitching of his lip still betrayed the agitation that moved him to the soul.

It was a perfectly dark and moonless night as the twain moved in the direction of the first tee. Altamount carried his own clubs. In a spirit of fatalism, he had come with only one ball—a new one. He never doubted for a moment that it would not be lost. Challoner had a box of matches. There was a swing and a crack, a swinging rush through the silent darkness, and Altamount strode forward.

"I shall find the ball to the left of a patch of sword grass near the hole," he said. "My second will lip the hole. I know it as well as if I could see the whole thing."

It was even as Altamount said; there lay the ball in exactly the same spot as it had fallen on the two previous drives. A second shot in the direction of the green lipped the hole. The same thing happened as the couple moved from tee to tee, Altamount prophesying the lie of the ball to an inch. They were half way round, and Challoner had not used more than two matches.

"We'll sit and smoke a cigarette before we turn," said Altamount. "Now you understand the full curse of my torture, Challoner. It will be the same wherever I go. I am bound to try on and on in the hope that time will break the spell. It would be the same at St. Andrews. After I had been once round the links, I should know where to look for my ball for ever. To preserve my reason, I should have to go wandering from link to link for the sake of half a day's variety. I should be known as a moody man, the Wandering Jew of the golf world, who never rests and who does the round in 68. . . . Let us get along."

It was just the same on the way home again. At the fourteenth hole a sloping patch of jungle grass had to be negotiated, with a stone quarry on the left. With a sudden spasm of rage, Altamount smote his ball away to the left clear of the line. The impact of the ball on the rock could be heard distinctly. Challoner smote his companion on the back wearily.

"Broken the spell!" he cried. "You're miles away with that shot from the hole. We'll call that pill well lost, and go back for a peg and cheroot in an easy-chair."

"Not yet," Altamount said between his teeth. "Let's go and have a look at the hole. After all, I should not be in the least surprised to find my ball lying on the spot designed for it—a pit of gravel past the hole, with a mimosa bush on the right."

Challoner strode through the tufts of grass with an impatient curiosity that he made no effort to conceal. He struck a match, and the blue flame twinkled in his fingers. Even

see my brand upon it. I did pull it to the left, but it struck the rock in the quarry, and after that it took a course to the right, and landed in the place where I expected to find it. Challoner, in all your experience, did you ever see the like of this before?"

Challoner was bound to admit that he never had. Altamount picked up his ball and pocketed it. He refused to play out the other four holes; it was merely prolonging the torture.

"I'll go home to bed and try to sleep. Find the fakir as soon as you can, for poor human nature could not stand much more of this. Good night."

Challoner went thoughtfully homewards. He paused at the club for half an hour on the way, for he felt in need of the tonic of human companionship. A light was burning in his sitting-room, the blinds were open. It was a little unusual, seeing that the servants had all retired. Standing quietly before the table was the fakir. He raised both hands to his forehead in a profound salaam.

"Because the sahib is good to us, and you need me, I return," he said. "I go to a far country, to Thibet, to look for the

death that is mine before I am born again, and I depart, as is necessary, without blackness of soul against any man."

"Not quite," Challoner said quietly. "There is my friend who hit you with the golf ball, for instance. You are going to take that spell off him before you go."

The fakir smiled until the countless wrinkles in his face expanded like a cobweb that lengthens in the wind. It might almost be said that he winked.



"Altamount fell into a chair and rocked himself in a slow abandonment of grief."

with the light in his hand, he could see nothing of the ball. Altamount worked unerringly across the grass down the rugged scarp to a patch of grass with a mimosa bush on one side. With a groan, he bent down and touched something round and gleaming.

"What did I tell you?" he said. "Hold the match down here. This is my ball right enough. No use pretending that it might have been lost by somebody else, because I

"There are mysteries and mysteries," he said slowly. "Many are known to the sahib, and many there are that can never be known till all things are finished. It was a small matter, and in the great holy time I had forgotten. And because you have been very good to us, yes, it shall be done. Three centuries ago there was something like it before. I was young then, and the men with the hats like the peaks of the hills yonder, they threatened me. . . . And they came no more because they held the spot to be accursed. . . . Your friend has the papyrus?"

Challoner explained that the talisman had not been destroyed. At sunrise the following morning the fakir would meet Altamount at the spot where the indignity had taken place. With an eagerness at which he would have laughed at any other time, Altamount was there. It was not pleasant to feel small in the presence of a native, but there are things that come like that.

"I was wrong," the fakir said. "I was wrong even because I have lived before, and seen big men as children, giving the gifts of the great God to the pursuit of the ball. It was of feathers and leather then, and it hurt not as the ball of the sahib. The papyrus?"

The last words came in a commanding tone of voice, the pin points of flame gleamed in the old man's eyes. With a hand none too steady, Altamount produced the scrap of paper. The figured 68 danced before him. Already the cold numbness seemed to be leaving his heart, the humming wheel in his head was slowing down.

"Reverse the paper," the fakir said, "and what do you see now? 68 no longer. You cry and whine to do one thing for a few days. What of me, who am doing the same thing since the world began? Yes, you have paid the debt, for your eyes tell me so, and the twitching of your lips. Not for your sake, but for the Challoner Sahib, who is good to us. What do you see?"

"It was 68," Altamount muttered. "But now it is upside down; it is 89. Does that mean—mean, hang it, you can't mean that number 68 is going to be 89 evermore?"

The fakir shook his head grimly; there was a glint of a smile amongst his wrinkles.

"Not so," he said. "I have seen this

before, and I know. I ask questions of your servants, who sometimes carry the long clubs for you, and they say that the greatest of the sahibs who play golf vary between 68 and 89. It is a matter of eye, of temperament, of the dinner the night before, or the extra peg at luncheon. As for me, it is as a child playing in the gutter. But never shall it be less than 68 or more than 89, for the papyrus says so."

The fakir turned on his heel and vanished in the scrub. A great revulsion of feeling had come over Altamount. In the first place, the spell was broken. The curse had been removed, and he was a free man again. And never was he going to play outside 89 again, never more inside 68. The former reflection was most pleasant. People would call his achievement of two days a great fluke, if they liked. They would also in future learn to regard him as a most consistent player.

"I'll have a go and see now," Altamount told himself. "Shouldn't be surprised to find that I get round in 89 exactly. That means putting an extra stroke in each hole. Here goes!"

To Challoner, at breakfast, Altamount burst in excitedly. The flame of health was on his face, the look of power in his eyes, the healthy beads had gathered on his forehead.

"It's all right," he panted. "I saw the fakir, and he made the thing right by the simple dodge of turning the papyrus upside down—from 68 to 89, you see. When I started just now, I was delighted to find myself playing just good average stuff. When I got up to the eighteenth, I had 5 for the hole for an 86. And, hang me, if I didn't get into a rut and take 8 for the hole, doing the round in exactly 89! But the spell is broken, and I'm going to play between 68 and 89 for the rest of my life. It doesn't sound much to an outsider, but the infinite variety of it, Challoner!"

Challoner nodded. As a golfer, he perfectly understood. He did not profess to explain; he had been too long in the East for that.

"But you'll always look back with pleasure to your two rounds of 68," he said.

"Nothing like the pleasure with which I look back on my 89 this morning," Altamount said fervently.



LEFT BEHIND.

"DOES your father preserve pheasants?"  
 "Why, no—poppa quit the 'canning' business away back in the 'nineties."

## THE EDITOR'S SCRAP-BOOK.

### THE IMPRESSIONIST.

They hung his picture upside down  
 (For he was an Impressionist)—  
 It brought him money and renown.

He was the topic of the town  
 When (having his intention missed)  
 They hung his picture upside down.

The work of Windsor Newton Brown,  
 Which formerly the critics hissed,  
 It brought him money and renown!

And did he look aggrieved and frown  
 Because by some propitious twist  
 They hung his picture upside down?

Oh, no. He took the proffered crown,  
 And wrote his name on Fortune's list;  
 It brought him money and renown.

His grief he soon contrived to drown,  
 He made no effort to resist,  
 They hung his picture upside down—  
 It brought him money and renown.

*Hansard Watt.*



JONES: Excuse me, neighbour, but every morning, on your way to the train, you walk across my lawn.

BROWN: I know it isn't right. I'm awfully sorry, but I can't help it. I have only just time to catch the train, there's the lawn and the temptation—and I'll be hanged if I can resist it!

JONES: I know just how you feel. I'm that way myself. I've got a shot-gun, and when I sit in my window and see you sprinting, it brings out my sporting instincts. I've stood it so far, but I can't answer for myself to-morrow morning.





## A WORD IN SEASON.

MARY ANN (to visitor): Master will be down presently, sir. But, for mussy's sake, stand away from that fire, sir. Your legs is warping horrible!

## EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES.

A curly-headed Cockney boy  
Up to his mother crept,  
And clinging to her ample skirts  
He hid his face and wept.

"Why, what's the matter now, my dear?  
The anxious mother said;  
And with her large, soapsuddy hand  
She stroked his flaxen head.

"'Twas that there teacher at the school,"  
Replied her sobbing son;  
"He didn't oughter punish me  
For what I 'adn't done."

"He didn't, and I'll learn him, too!"  
She cried in tones irate,  
"I won't have no unfairness shown,  
And so I tell him, straight!"

Her indignation rose as she  
Her stricken offspring viewed,  
"What was it as you 'adn't done,  
My pretty lamb?" she cooed.

Then lifting up his brimming eyes,  
So innocent and mild—  
"I 'adn't done my lessons," sobbed  
The broken-hearted child.

Jessie Pope.

At a certain national school in Lincolnshire (under the old *régime*), on the last day of the term it was customary for an inspector to examine the children as to their progress. It was also customary for a local philanthropist at the end of the ordeal to present each child with a bag of nuts as he or she left for the holidays. On one occasion the children were assembled, and the inspector arrived, and stood at the teacher's desk ready to put the scholars through their paces.

"Now, boys and girls," he commenced sternly, "what have we assembled here for this morning?"

"Noots!" came the instant response, vociferated from a hundred hungry throats.



A SUNDAY-SCHOOL teacher was trying to instil into her scholars the benefits to be derived from a lively conscience, which she likened to the bites of a serpent. Noticing that the class was becoming inattentive, she said briskly—

"Now, then, children, what is it that bites us?"

"Fleas!" came the unanimous response.



## A NATURAL MISTAKE.

FIRST MOTORIST: Hullo, Jones! I thought I recognised your voice. Come and have a drink, old chap.

SECOND MOTORIST: Excuse me, I'm not Mr. Jones. I'm his sister.



A SKY TERRIER.

"I'm buying a toy aeroplane, Mrs. Murphy."

"Indeed, sorr, Oi hope, now, that it won't bark at nights!"



#### THE ONLY WAY.

MRS. DE JONES (to local greengrocer, who is in much demand as "extra man" for dinners, etc.): And, Mr. Binns, I have a few friends coming to dinner next Tuesday, and I want you to help in the waiting, as usual.

BINNS: Very sorry, madam, but I'm engaged by Mrs. Smyth for that evening. Couldn't you put your friends off until the following evening?

#### ROMANCE—THE SEMPITERNAL.

An old toll-gate—a faulty wheel,  
A spill—a maiden in distress;  
A cavalier—a mute appeal,  
A horse left riderless!

To youth heartwhole  
Sped artful dart,  
He took his toll,  
And she—his heart!

'Twas thus involved in Cupid's net  
Our great, great, great grand-parents met.

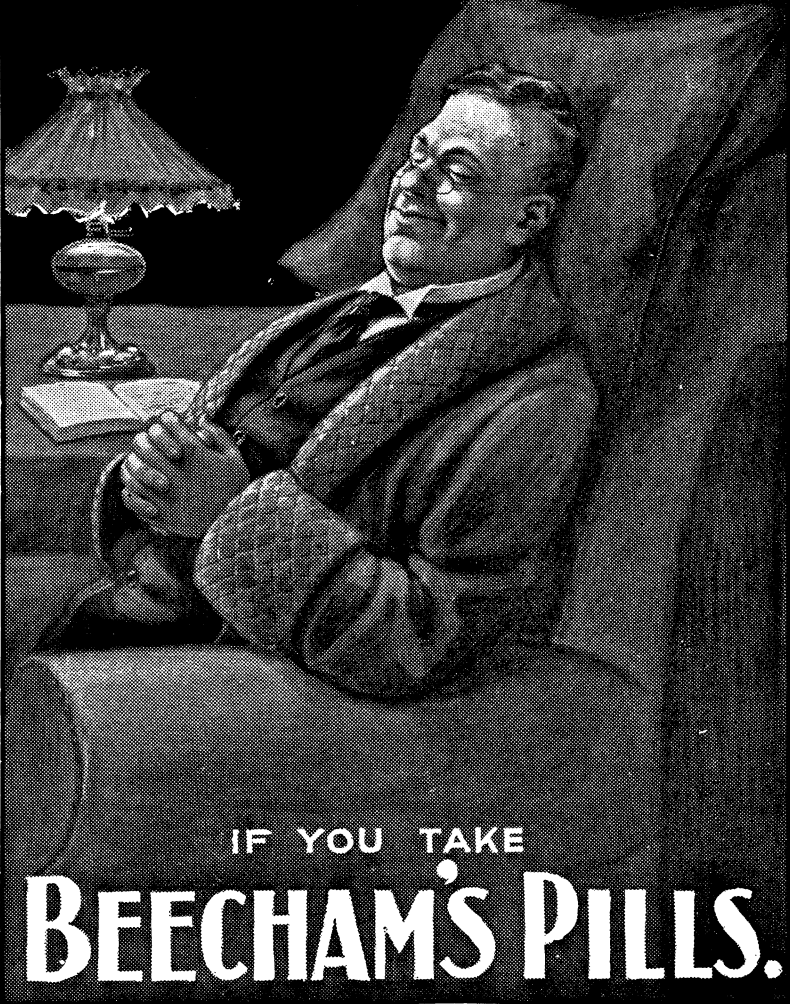
An airship with a wing awry,  
A flutter o'er the nearing waves,  
A rescuer swoops from the sky,  
A maid a grapnel saves!

To youth heartwhole  
Will speed the dart,  
He will take toll,  
And she—his heart.

Up in the clouds where pinions beat  
Will our great, great grandchildren meet!

W. Howard Horder.

YOU CAN SLEEP COMFORTABLY  
ANYWHERE



IF YOU TAKE  
**BEECHAM'S PILLS.**



*How light  
the pastry  
and  
the cakes,  
When cook  
with  
**BORWICK'S  
POWDER**  
bakes!*

**"Bermaline"**  
THE PEERLESS  
**Brown  
Bread**

FROM ALL  
HIGH-CLASS BAKERS AND CONFECTIONERS

A PRESSING ENGAGEMENT.

I pressed my suit, yet with no passionate flow  
Of winged words, no arguments astute,  
But merely with a smothered grunt or so  
I pressed my suit.

It seemed to me uncalled for, to prostrate  
My person suppliant—wise, and eke begin  
To rave about the truly parlous state  
My heart was in.

In fact, I looked upon the whole affair  
As commonplace, and, from a man of sense  
Too trivial to merit aught but bare  
Indifference.

But judge me not too hardly, nor condemn  
My heartlessness, ere haply I set forth  
Extenuating facts, in hope to stem  
Your flood of wrath.



AFTER THE PARTY.

"GOOD-BYE, darling! I hope you've had a good time?"  
"Thank you, I've had a very *long* time."

I did not emulate the lovesick swain  
Who vows, an' his petition be denied,  
To soothe his sorrows, and relieve his pain  
By suicide.

Nor, yet again, did it occur to me  
To ape the class of lover that reverts  
To bosom smittings—simple lunacy—  
Besides, it hurts.

I venture to entreat that you delay  
Your verdict, lest it be without a cause.  
For there is that, in what I have to say,  
To give you pause;

To cool your anger, ere you set about  
The dubbing of me "Churl and heartless brute,"  
Who wished to flatten sundry creases out,  
And pressed my suit.

Rupert Thorold.

# FASCINATION OF FORM.

WHY REMAIN STOUTER THAN YOU NEED BE?

**W**HEN a lady of middle age has retained the graceful figure of early womanhood and the fresh complexion of youth, she possesses charm and fascination beyond compare. Then, these beauties are nearly always indicative of perfect health, another priceless possession.

Her stout sister is nearly always ailing in some way, feels languid, depressed, out of sorts, and generally looks so. This unenviable condition is too often aggravated by the attempts made to starve down over-fatness and overweight. Insidious drugs are taken, most of which are of mineral origin. And so, without really curing herself of the disease of obesity, she gradually loses her good looks and becomes limp and flabby. This torturing state of things is absolutely remediable by the simple and harmless Antipon treatment.

Antipon rapidly reduces weight, acts as a much-needed tonic on the fat-laden but ill-nourished organism, and, best of all, overpowers that stubborn tendency to put on excessive flesh which is the despair of so many people, especially of women who otherwise could lay claim to no common beauty.

The grand weight-reducing, obesity-destroying, and tonic properties of Antipon, which is a most refreshing liquid, composed of nothing but harmless vegetable ingredients, have earned for it world-wide fame, and countless unsolicited testimonials from all parts of the world are exhibited at the offices of the Antipon Company.

The rare tonic virtue of Antipon is soon shown by its extraordinary influence on the digestive system. The jaded appetite is revived (many stout persons are very poor eaters), digestion is immensely improved, and assimilation and nutrition are perfected. There is no need to eat sparingly now that the obese tendency is being eradicated under the treatment. On the contrary, feed the blood and muscles and nerves. Eat and

enjoy your food, and (as the excess fat is being expelled for good and all) new rich red blood will course in the arteries, bringing generous repair to fibre and tissue; the limbs will rapidly be restored to firmness and shapely beauty, and the waist and hips and all other parts to that harmony of proportions which constitutes the fascination of form.

The rapid reduction effected by Antipon is manifested within a day and a night of the first dose; from 8 oz. upwards in ordinary cases; in severe cases the

decrease may even exceed 3 lb. Every day there is a pleasing reduction in all instances, each dose being a sure step in the direction of health, strength, and permanent beauty of figure.

Antipon is sold in bottles, price 2s. 6d. and 4s. 6d., by Chemists, Stores, &c.; or, in the event of difficulty, may be had (on remitting amount), carriage paid, privately packed, direct from the Antipon Company, Olmar Street, London, S.E.



*Stout Lady: "Oh! I never seem to enjoy my meals now, yet I get stouter every day!"*

*Slim Lady: "My dear, you must do as I did, take Antipon; now I can enjoy anything, and have lost a stone and three-quarters."*



BROWN was a great golfer, and, anxious to inculcate Green with his enthusiasm, lent him some clubs and invited him to come round the links. The novice's play caused him great amusement, especially when a wild shot landed his ball beneath some iron railings.

"Have a shot at it, man," said Brown; "I've been in worst places often."

"I shall break my club," objected Green, "if I do."

"Nonsense! Your clubs are made for the game, not the game for the clubs. Go on, don't funk it!"

At that, Green gave a mighty swipe, his club flew into many pieces, and Brown laughed till the tears ran down his face.

"Awfully sorry, old man," said Green; "it's your club."

Brown's smile froze—he had forgotten the fact.

"I HEAR you resigned your position as treasurer of the 'Don't Worry' Club?"

"Yes. No one cared whether they paid their dues, so what was the use?"

"WHERE is the pruning-knife, Johnson?" inquired a gentleman of his gardener, who, though a literal person in his speech, was very careless in his habits. "Lost again, I suppose, as usual."

"Oh, no, sir—it's not *lost*," replied Johnson, "but I can't put my hand on it, sir."

"It comes to about the same thing," said his master impatiently; "if you can't put your hand on it, it's lost."

"Oh, no, sir, it's not lost, because I know where it is."

"Well, go and get it."

"Please, sir, I can't; it's down the well, sir."

WIFE (dramatically): Just think! The Robinsons will be here in twenty minutes, and the cook has spoiled the dinner.

HUSBAND: Don't worry! We'll make them drink some of your home-made wine, and they will never know the difference!



MR. SMITH: In a short time now we shall be able to do without fuel, and do all our heating by alcohol.

TOMMY SMITH: That's good. When Uncle James comes, all we shall have to do will be to connect him with the kitchen range.



"AND," continued the teacher, "how many feet are there in a mile?"

"Two thousand," promptly answered Willie Meter-son, whose father was president of a taxicab company.



FIRST PORTER: That man gave me a large tip.

SECOND PORTER: Yes. And you gave yourself away by thanking him and smiling.

FIRST PORTER: What do you mean?

SECOND PORTER: Why, if you had acted natural, he'd have felt obliged to do it next time. See?



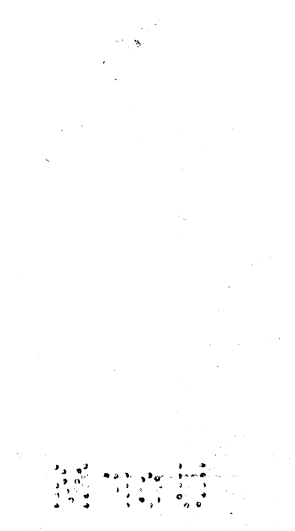
WIFE: Isn't Mrs. Pacer a charming hostess? She makes us all feel as if we were at home.

HUSBAND: But I don't *want* to feel that way at *her* parties!



NO EXTRA CHARGE.

AUNT JANE: A ticket and a half to London, please.  
BOOKING CLERK (who does not see Aunt Jane's small nephew): One's enough, lady. We don't charge by weight.





"BABES IN THE WOOD." BY W. R. SYMONDS.

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"THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG." BY W. R. SYMONDS.

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## THE ART OF MR. W. R. SYMONDS.

BY AUSTIN CHESTER.

IT is difficult to decide what characteristic it may be which in a man's nature decides him to follow the career of art; almost as difficult is it to do this as to draw an arbitrary line between Nature and art, and say here Nature ends and art begins—a feat which is, but which should not be, arduous of accomplishment, since art, in the most popular sense of the word, is used to designate everything which we distinguish from Nature.

Probably, however, it is love of Nature which constrains a man to the endeavour to

place permanently on record in art that love, and thus illustrate that

Nature is made better by no mean,  
But Nature makes that mean: so, over that art  
Which you say adds to Nature, is an art  
That Nature makes.

It was in crayon-portraiture that Mr. Symonds' first successes were made, and his rare facility of hand, and his admirably natural gift of seizing a likeness, soon brought him an almost embarrassing number of sitters. Frequently he would have five or six a day, and, on occasion, as many as eight;

and thus, at the comparatively early age of eighteen, he was, even at the modest prices he asked, making a very creditable income. He had grace, invention, and ability, and if then his work was experimental, ease and spontaneity followed quickly on practice.

Steady endeavour does not always meet with success, but in the case of Mr. Symonds it did, and having gained by his studies in the Ipswich School, and having anticipated as though by instinct the good he would acquire by change of environment, he transferred himself, his industry, and his ambitions, to the Royal Academy Schools, in which he passed through the usual course of art training prevalent in the 'seventies.

Having completed his course at these schools, he betook himself to Antwerp, and fell at once under the magnetic, infallible, and irresistible charm both of the place and of its teaching, for it is the sensitive eye of a stranger for that which is both novel and vivifying that makes the study of art in a foreign school so helpful.

Returning home after some months'

sojourn at Antwerp, Mr. Symonds made the chief town of his native county, Ipswich, his headquarters, and here displayed a ready ability that made it by no means difficult for even the Philistine in art to prognosticate for the young painter a successful future. He was the recipient of several com-

missions in that particular phase of painting—portraiture—in which he has since exploited his talent. The success which attended the finishing of his first commissions influenced other patrons in their choice of an artist, and thus Mr. Symonds' own popularity had the effect of limiting his excursions in the large fields of decorative, historic, poetic, classic, or romantic art, or attempting, by experiment in technique, to solve, by means of science, the various different problems of light which are to-day occu-



THE RT. HON. THE VISCOUNT AND VISCOUNTESS SHERBROOKE.  
BY W. R. SYMONDS.

*Reproduced by permission of Lady Sherbrooke.*

pying the time of so many of his contemporaries.

But if his early successes gave him less time for the development of the imaginative side of his work, he shows, by an occasional departure into subject, that his adherence to

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"MIGNON." BY W. R. SYMONDS.

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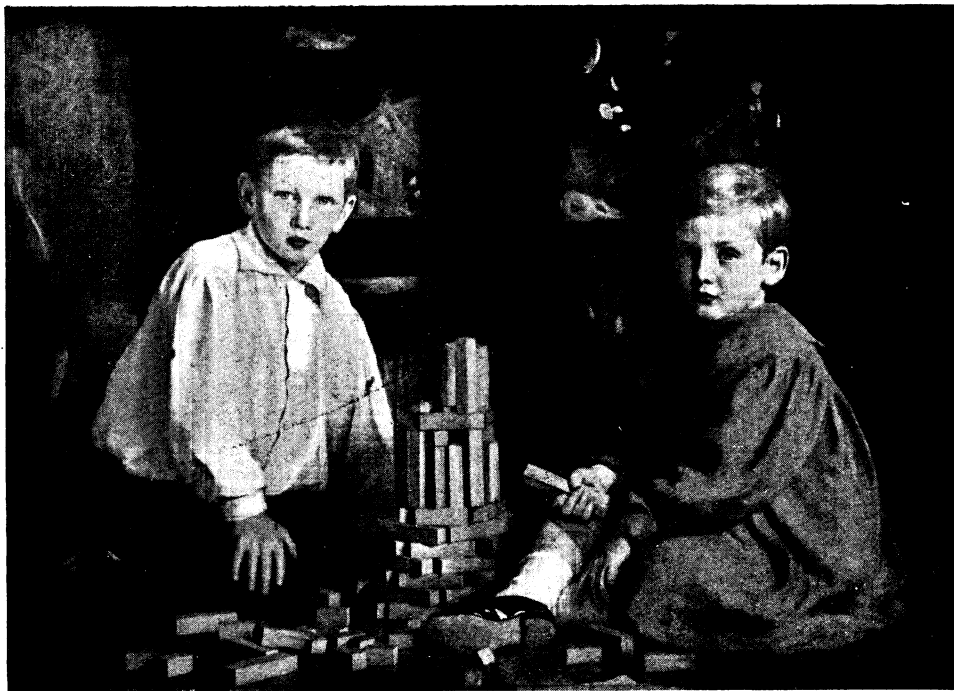
IAN, SON OF J. CAMERON GRANT, ESQ. BY W. R. SYMONDS.

*Reproduced by permission of J. Cameron Grant, Esq.*

years previously, had been killed in action in the sortie from Candahar; also the portrait of an officer in the sister service, Captain Berners, R.N., and portraits of the daughter of Mr. Thomas Lea, M.P., and of Mrs. Miller, of Ipswich.

In 1883 Mr. Symonds was represented in the Academy by no less than four important portraits, one of the Rev. D. P. Chase, D.D., Principal of St. Mary Hall, Oxford, which was painted for the members of the Hall: one of Mrs. Charles Cheston; one of Mr. J. Denison Pender; and one of Jim,

the grandson of Sir James Anderson. Portraits of Mrs. Packard and Mrs. Weller-Poley were in the Academy of 1884, and 1885 held that of Sir Richard Wallace, Bart., K.C.B., M.P., of Wallace Gallery fame. 1886 is marked by the portrait pictures of Viscount and Viscountess Sherbrooke, and of the children of Mr. Henry Brassey, and 1887 by portraits of Mr., Mrs., and Master Holland, of Benhall Lodge, Saxmundham, and of Surgeon-General W. C. Maclean, C.B., M.D., Professor of Medicine, Army Medical School, and "The Portrait of a



HUGH AND EUSTACE, SONS OF G. F. CHANCE, ESQ. BY W. R. SYMONDS.  
*Reproduced by permission of G. F. Chance, Esq.*



MRS. FRY AND HER SONS. BY W. R. SYMONDS.  
*Reproduced by permission of S. Fry, Esq.*



HUGH AND ROWLAND, SONS OF THE HON. HENRY CUBITT. BY W. R. SYMONDS.

*Reproduced by permission of the Hon. Henry Cubitt.*

Lady." The year 1888 is marked by the picture of a very well-known man—to be later presented to the Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley—Sir William Aitkin, M.D., F.R.S., Professor of Pathology, Army Medical School. 1888 shows us the talent of the artist turned to the portrayal of a dignitary of the Church, the Venerable R. H. Groome, M.A., Archdeacon of Suffolk; there

were also, that same year, exhibited portraits of Leonard, youngest son of Mr. Alfred Tate, and one of Mrs. Hutton, St. Petersburg.

The incognita of another lady was preserved in the Academy catalogue of 1889, but 1890 showed an excellent likeness of a very talented doctor—the loss of whom Kensington has lately had to deplore—William Travers, M.D. and this same year's



"CHILDREN WITH A PARROT." BY W. R. SYMONDS.

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"DAY-DREAMS." BY W. R. SYMONDS.

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exhibition contained a subject-picture entitled "A Morning Meal."

Portraits of Mrs. John Cameron Grant and Mrs. T. P. Borrett mark the exhibitions of the two succeeding years. 1893, however, is distinguished by a picture of "Kittens," a departure into animal painting, most successfully repeated, under the title "Family Cares," in the exhibition of 1895, which held also a portrait of Mrs. Patrick Grant.

The Royal Academy Exhibition of 1897 held Mr. Symonds' portraits of Maurice, son of Mr. J. Richards Kelly, and Oswald, son

of Mr. Archibald E. Scott; 1898 that of Lilika, daughter of Mr. R. Wemyss Swan; 1899 those of Sylvia and Dorothy, daughters of Mr. W. Peart Robinson, and of Harry and Alick, the sons of the Hon. Henry Cubitt.

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, Mr. Symonds has shown in exhibition, at the Royal Academy, portraits of the children of Mr. J. Binney; Charlie, son of Mr. F. Shaw; Marjorie, daughter of Mr. Thomas P. Barrett; Hugh and Rowland, sons of the Hon. Henry Cubitt, M.P.; Hugh



GENESTA, DAUGHTER OF E. CUTHBERT HEATH, ESQ. BY W. R. SYMONDS.

*Reproduced by permission of E. Cuthbert Heath, Esq.*

and Eustace, sons of Mr. G. F. Chance ; yet another presentation portrait—that of Surgeon-General Jameson, C.B. ; Genesta, daughter of Mr. E. Cuthbert Heath ; Archie and Guy, sons of the Hon. Henry Cubitt, in addition to the subject-pictures “Sheltering from the Storm,” “The New Doll,” which has found favour in the large photogravure form, and probably one of the most popular of all his subject-pictures, “Babes in the Wood,” recently issued as a photogravure by

E. M. Hester, of which the large hand-coloured versions are even more effective in their reproduction of the details of the original than our own necessarily far smaller plate can be, by reason of the great reduction involved.

In last year’s Academy there were two portraits, admirable examples of Mr. Symonds’ work—one of Hugh, son of Mr. Thomas Meadows Clutterbuck, and one of Louise, daughter of the Hon. William Vanneck.

"Speaking generally," wrote Ruskin, "portraiture may be divided into three great schools. The greatest is the Venetian, headed by Titian, and entirely right; on the one side of it is the German school, headed by Holbein, erring slightly on the side of intentness and force of definition; on the other side of it the English school, headed by Sir Joshua, erring slightly on the side of facility and grace of abstraction."

These words were written fifty years ago,

with portraiture, we find that the latter amount to considerably more than a quarter. We do not quarrel with this large proportion of portraits, for many a portrait painter has acquired, and rightly, a high place in the hierarchy of paint.

The British school of painting, indeed, began with portraiture, and amongst the sixteenth and seventeenth century painters we find Nicholas Hildyard and Isaac Oliver painting miniatures in Elizabeth's time. A



"THE NEW DOLL." BY W. R. SYMONDS.

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and the enormous advance in popularity of portraiture, which 1909 showed over 1859, demonstrated also that the portrait painters of to-day have developed into such individuality as to make it impossible to say that they are now followers of this or that school of portrait painting.

In last year's Academy (1909), if we deduct from the total number—1838—of exhibits (omitting the 438 drawings in the Architectural Room), those which deal

pupil of Rubens, a Scotchman named Jamesone, and a pupil of Vandyck, William Dobson, bridged the way between those earlier men, Hildyard and Oliver, to the great portrait painters whom by patronage we have naturalised, Lely and Kneller, but these artists were painters of men and women, and it is not until we come to the time of Sir Joshua and Gainsborough that we find English art applied to children as subjects.

Many a painter's genius has realised the



HUGH, SON OF THOMAS MEADOWS CLUTTERBUCK, ESQ. BY W. R. SYMONDS.

*Reproduced by permission of Thomas Meadows Clutterbuck, Esq.*

stimulus to his art to be found in the delineation of children, the elasticity of poise, the glory of delicate colour. We see this in the presentments of the child Christ and the Cupids and Bacchuses of the early masters. With Vandyck came the portrayal of the sophisticated child, and since his time a host of small people, the best work of the best men, smile at us from their several canvases—"Las Meninas," "Miss Alexander," "Harriet Maconochie," "Master Buttall" ("The Blue Boy"), "Master Baby," "The Infant Hercules," to take at random the names of a few well-known pictures of children; and it is matter of history that the finest of the subjects Sir Joshua painted for Boydell's Shakespeare is the Puck, "in which the artist's inspiration was caught, not from the realms of imagination or fancy, but from observation of the child-nature he knew and loved."

How much one would like to know what happened to these children in after-life who have been immortalised in paint, but *sic transit*, even a Master Buttall.

If the taste for portraiture goes on increasing at the speed it has acquired in the last twenty years, it may yet give us, in paint, the seven ages of some famous man.

In enumerating the portraits and pictures which Mr. Symonds has painted, we have kept, perhaps too exclusively, to those that have been exhibited in the Royal Academy; but there has been other work equally worthy of attention in the Paris Salon, in the Grosvenor



MRS. CALER R. ROSE. BY W. R. SYMONDS.  
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Gallery, and in the New Gallery. Among such portraits are those of Sir John Pender, the Marquis of Tweeddale; Sir William Mure Muir, K.C.B., Field Director-General, Army Medical Department; J. Louis Mieville, Esq.; Sir Hugh Gilzean Reid; the Hon. Henry Cubitt, Lord Lieutenant of Surrey; Sir Charles Dalrymple, Bart.; Professor J. D. Eyre, F.R.S., now in Queen's College, Belfast; Sir James Anderson, the famous captain of the *Great Eastern*; "Bobby and his Playmates"; Master Archie Dankes, and Master Ian Grant, the last of which pictures received honourable mention in the Salon of 1899. The artist has portraits hanging in various parts of the country, amongst others, in Oriel, Pembroke, and Magdalen Colleges, Oxford, in Queen's College, Belfast, and in his own county in the Town Hall, Ipswich.

And while grouping this catalogue of portraiture, one may point to the interesting coincidence that Mr. Symonds has been selected to paint the portraits of four well-known picture collectors, Sir John Pender, Mr. Frederick Fish, Mr. J. Louis Mieville, and Sir Richard Wallace, and that he has been chosen to paint no less than four of the prominent members of the Army Medical School.

In the especial place in "the hierarchy of paint" to which the portrait painter rightfully belongs, Mr. Symonds must be placed high, from the fact that he is gifted with a sym-



WILLIAM WEBB, ESQ. BY W. R. SYMONDS.  
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LOUISE, DAUGHTER OF THE HON. WILLIAM VANECK. BY W. R. SYMONDS.

*Reproduced by permission of the Artist.*





"SHELTERING FROM THE STORM." BY W. R. SYMONDS.

*Reproduced by permission of the Artist.*

pathetic quality which enables him to secure that often elusive characteristic that is known colloquially as likeness. He has that subtlety of observation, that infallible perception of the something which underlies the obvious in us all, and more especially in children, the portrayal of which upon his canvas is the true gauge of the artistry of the painter.

A few of Mr. Symonds' pictures, notably the one entitled "The New Doll," exhibit genuine insight for the deep meaning to be read into child's play, which is put into

proverbial language in the saying: "What little Jill doesn't learn, big Jill never knows."

In "Mignon," exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery, 1889, in "Miranda," and in "The Princess and the Frog," now in the Corporation Art Gallery, Bradford, we are made conscious that he never loses sight of the fact that to the child doth—

Seem  
The earth, and every common sight  
Apparell'd in celestial light,  
The glory and the freshness of a dream.

# THE CLOCK.

By A. E. W. MASON.



R. TWISS was a great walker, and it was his habit, after his day's work was done, to walk from his pleasant office in the Adelphi to his home at Hampstead. On one afternoon he was detained to a

later hour than usual by one of his clients, a Captain Brayton, over some matter of a mortgage. Mr. Twiss looked at his office clock.

"You are going west, I suppose?" he said. "I wonder if you would walk with me as far as Piccadilly? It will not be very much out of your way, and I have a reason for wishing your company."

"By all means," replied Captain Brayton, and the two men set forth.

Mr. Twiss, however, seemed in a difficulty as to how he should broach his subject, and for a while the pair walked in silence. They, indeed, reached Pall Mall, and were walking down that broad thoroughfare, before a word of any importance was uttered. And even then it was chance which furnished the occasion. A young man of Captain Brayton's age came down from the steps of a club and walked towards them. As he passed beneath a street lamp, Mr. Twiss noticed his face, and ever so slightly started with surprise. At almost the same moment, the young man swerved across the road at a run, as though suddenly he remembered a very pressing appointment. The two men walked on again for a few paces, and then Captain Brayton observed: "There is a screw loose there, I am afraid."

Mr. Twiss shook his head.

"I am sorry to hear you say so," he replied. "It was, indeed, about Archie Cranfield that I was anxious to speak to you. I promised his father that I would be something more than Archie's mere man of affairs, if I were allowed, and I confess that I am troubled to some extent. You know him well?"

Captain Brayton nodded his head.

"Perhaps I should say that I did know him well," he returned. "We were at the same school, we passed through Chatham together, but since he has relinquished actual service we have seen very little of one another." Here he hesitated, but eventually made up his mind to continue in a guarded fashion. "Also, I am bound to admit that there has been cause for disagreement. We quarrelled."

Mr. Twiss was disappointed. "Then you can tell me nothing of him recently?" he asked, and Captain Brayton shrugged his shoulders.

"Nothing but what all the little world of his acquaintances already knows. He has grown solitary, a little forbidding in his manner, and, what is most noticeable, sly—extraordinarily sly. While he is speaking with you, he will smile at some secret thought of his; the affairs of the world have lost their interest for him, he hardly listens, and seldom speaks. He is concerned with some private matter, and he hides it slyly. That is the character, at all events, which his friends give of him."

They had now reached the corner of St. James's Street, and as they turned up the hill, Mr. Twiss took up the tale.

"I am not surprised at what you tell me. It is a great pity, for we both remember him ambitious and a good soldier. I am inclined to blame the house in the country for the change in him."

Captain Brayton, however, did not agree.

"It goes deeper than that," he said. "Men who live alone in the country may show furtive ways in towns, no doubt. But why does he live alone in the country? No, that will not do"; and at the top of St. James's Street the two men parted.

Mr. Twiss walked up Bond Street, and the memory of that house in the country in which Archie Cranfield chose to bury himself kept him company. He had travelled down into the eastern counties on a Saturday afternoon, and a walk of six miles had taken him to its door one day when Cranfield was away. It stood upon the borders of Essex and Suffolk, a small Elizabethan house backed upon the Stour, a place of black beams and

low ceilings and great fireplaces. It had been buttressed up at the back, where the ground ran down to the river-bank, and hardly a window was on a level with its neighbour. A picturesque place enough, but Mr. Twiss was a lover of towns and of paved footways and illuminated streets. He imagined it on such an evening as this, dark, and the rain dripping cheerlessly from the trees. He imagined its inmate crouching over the fire with his sly smile upon his face, and of a sudden the picture took on a sinister look, and a strong sense of discomfort made Mr. Twiss cast an uneasy glance behind him. He had in his pocket a letter of instructions from Archie Cranfield, bidding him buy the house outright with its furniture, since it had now all come into the market.

It was a week after this when next Captain Brayton came to Mr. Twiss's office, and, their business done, he spoke of his own accord of Archie Cranfield.

"I am going to stay with him," he said. "He wrote to me on the night of the day when we passed him in Pall Mall. He told me that he would make up a small bachelor party. I am very glad, for, to tell the truth, our quarrel was a sufficiently serious one, and here, it seems, is the end to it."

Mr. Twiss was delighted, and shook his client warmly by the hand.

"You shall bring me news of Archie Cranfield," he said—"better news than I have," he added, with a sudden gravity upon his face. For in making the arrangements for the purchase of the house, he had come into contact with various neighbours of Archie Cranfield, and from all of them he had had but one report. Cranfield had a bad name in those parts. There were no particular facts given to account for his reputation. It was all elusive and vague, an impression conveyed by Archie Cranfield himself, by something strange and sly in his demeanour. He sat chuckling in a sort of triumph, to which no one had the clue, or, on the other hand, he fell into deep silences like a man with a trouble on his mind.

"Be sure you come to see me when you return," said Mr. Twiss, and Captain Brayton replied heartily: "Surely I will." But he never did, for in a few days the newspapers were busy with the strange enigma of his death.

## II.

THE first hint of this enigma was conveyed to Mr. Twiss late one night at his private address. It came in the shape of a telegram

from Archie Cranfield, which seemed to the agitated solicitor rather a cry of distress than a message sent across the wires.

"Come at once. I am in terrible need.—Cranfield."

There were no trains at so late an hour by which Mr. Twiss could reach his client; he must needs wait until the morning. He travelled, however, by the first train from Liverpool Street. Although the newspapers were set out upon the bookstall, not one of them contained a word of anything amiss at Archie Cranfield's house, and Mr. Twiss began to breathe more freely. It was too early for a cab to be in waiting at the station, and Mr. Twiss set out to walk the six miles. It was a fine, clear morning of November; but for the want of leaves and birds, and the dull look of the countryside, Mr. Twiss might have believed the season to be June. His spirits rose as he walked, his blood warmed to a comfortable glow, and by the time he came to the gates of the house, Cranfield's summons had become a trifling thing. As he walked up to the door, however, his mood changed, for every blind in the house was drawn. The door was opened before he could touch the bell, and it was opened by Cranfield himself. His face was pale and disordered, his manner that of a man at his wits' end.

"What has happened?" asked Mr. Twiss as he entered the hall.

"A terrible thing!" replied Cranfield. "It's Brayton. Have you breakfasted? I suppose not. Come, and I will tell you while you eat."

He walked up and down the room while Mr. Twiss ate his breakfast, and gradually, by question and by answer, the story took shape. Corroboration was easy and was secured. There was no real dispute about the facts; they were simple and clear.

There were two other visitors in the house besides Captain Brayton, one a barrister named Henry Chalmers, and the second, William Linfield, a man about town, as the saying goes. Both men stood in much the same relationship to Archie Cranfield as Captain Brayton—that is to say, they were old friends who had seen little of their host of late, and who were somewhat surprised to receive his invitation after so long an interval. They had accepted it in the same spirit as Brayton, and the three men arrived together on Wednesday evening. On Friday the party of four shot over some turnip fields and a few clumps of wood which belonged to Archie Cranfield, and played a game of bridge in the

evening. In the opinion of all, Brayton was never in better spirits. On Saturday the four men shot again and returned to the house as darkness was coming on. They took tea in the smoking-room, and after tea Brayton declared his intention to write some letters before dinner. He went upstairs to his room for that purpose.

The other three men remained in the smoking-room. Of that there was no doubt. Both Chalmers and Linfield were emphatic upon the point. Chalmers, in particular, said—

"We sat talking on a well-worn theme, I in a chair on one side of the fireplace, Archie-Cranfield in another opposite to me, and Linfield sitting on the edge of the billiard-table between us. How the subject cropped up I cannot remember, but I found myself arguing that most men hid their real selves all their lives even from their most intimate friends, that there were secret chambers in a man's consciousness wherein he lived a different life from that which the world saw and knew, and that it was only by some rare mistake the portals of that chamber were ever passed by any other man. Linfield would not hear of it. If this hidden man were the real man, he held, in some way or another the reality would triumph, and some vague suspicion of the truth would in the end be felt by all his intimates. I upheld my view by instances from the courts of law, Linfield his by the aid of a generous imagination, while Cranfield looked from one to the other of us with his sly, mocking smile. I turned to him, indeed, in some heat.

"Well, since you appear to know, Cranfield, tell me which is right," and his pipe fell from his fingers and broke upon the hearth. He stood up, with his face grown white and his lips drawn back from his teeth in a kind of snarl.

"What do you mean by that?" he asked; and before I could answer, the door was thrown violently open, and Cranfield's manservant burst into the room. He mastered himself enough to say—

"May I speak to you, sir?"

"Cranfield went outside the door with him. He could not have moved six paces from the door, for though he closed it behind him, we heard the sound of his voice and of his servant's speaking in low tones. Moreover, there was no appreciable moment of time between the cessation of the voices and Cranfield's reappearance in the room. He came back to the fireplace and said very quietly—

"I have something terrible to tell you. Brayton has shot himself."

"He then glanced from Linfield's face to mine, and sat down in a chair heavily. Then he crouched over the fire shivering. Both Linfield and myself were too shocked by the news to say a word for a moment or two. Then Linfield asked—

"But is he dead?"

"Humphreys says so," Cranfield returned. "I have telephoned to the police and to the doctor."

"But we had better go upstairs ourselves and see," said I. And we did."

Thus Chalmers. Humphreys, the manservant, gave the following account—

"The bell rang from Captain Brayton's room at half-past five. I answered it at once myself, and Captain Brayton asked me at what hour the post left. I replied that we sent the letters from the house to the post-office in the village at six. He then asked me to return at that hour and fetch those of his which would be ready. I returned precisely at six, and I saw Captain Brayton lying in a heap upon the rug in front of the fire. He was dead, and he held a revolver tightly clenched in his hand. As I stepped over him, I smelt that something was burning. He had shot himself through the heart, and his clothes were singed, as if he had held the revolver close to his side."

A question was, at this point in Humphreys' evidence, asked by the coroner.

"Did you recognise the revolver?"

"Not until Captain Brayton's hand was unclenched."

"But then you did?"

"Yes," said Humphreys.

The coroner pointed to the table on which a revolver lay.

"Is that the weapon?"

Humphreys took it up and looked at the handle, on which two initials were engraved—"A. C."

"Yes," said the man. "I recognised it as Mr. Cranfield's. He kept it in a drawer by his bedside."

No revolver was found amongst Captain Brayton's possessions.

It became clear that, while the three men were talking in the billiard-room, Captain Brayton had gone to Cranfield's room, taken his revolver, and killed himself with it. No evidence, however, was produced which supplied a reason for Brayton's suicide. His affairs were in good order, his means sufficient, his prospects of advancement in his career sound. Nor was there a suggestion

of any private unhappiness. The tragedy, therefore, was entered in that list of mysteries which are held insoluble.

"I might," said Chalmers, "perhaps resume the argument which Humphreys interrupted, with a better instance than any which I induced—the instance of Captain Brayton."

### III.

"You won't go?" Archie Cranfield pleaded with Mr. Twiss. "Linfield and Chalmers leave to-day. If you go too, I shall be entirely alone."

"But why should you stay?" the lawyer returned. "Surely you hardly propose to remain through the winter in this house?"

"No, but I must stay on for a few days; I have to make arrangements," said Cranfield; and seeing that he was in earnest in his intention to go, Mr. Twiss was persuaded. He stayed on, and recognised, in consequence, that the death of Captain Brayton had amongst its consequences one which he had not expected. The feeling in the neighbourhood changed towards Archie Cranfield. It cannot be said that he became popular—he wore too sad and joyless an air—but sympathy was shown to him in many acts of courtesy and in a greater charity of language.

A retired admiral, of a strong political complexion, who had been one of the foremost to dislike Archie Cranfield, called, indeed, to offer his condolences. Archie Cranfield did not see him, but Mr. Twiss walked down the drive with him to the gate.

"It's hard on Cranfield," said the admiral. "We all admit it. It wasn't fair of Brayton to take his host's revolver. But for the accident that Cranfield was in the billiard-room with Linfield and Chalmers, the affair might have taken on quite an ugly look. We all feel that in the neighbourhood, and we shall make it up to Cranfield. Just tell him that, Mr. Twiss, if you will."

"It is very kind of you all, I am sure," replied Mr. Twiss, "but I think Cranfield will not continue to live here. The death of Captain Brayton has been too much of a shock for him."

Mr. Twiss said "Good-bye" to the admiral at the gate, and returned to the house. He was not easy in his mind, and as he walked round the lawn under the great trees, he cried to himself—

"It is lucky, indeed, that Archie Cranfield was in the billiard-room with Linfield and Chalmers; otherwise, Heaven knows what I might have been brought to believe myself."

The two men had quarrelled; Brayton himself had imparted that piece of knowledge to Mr. Twiss. Then there was the queer change in Archie Cranfield's character, which had made for him enemies of strangers, and strangers of his friends—the slyness, the love of solitude, the indifference to the world, the furtive smile as of a man conscious of secret powers, the whole indescribable uncanniness of him. Mr. Twiss marshalled his impressions and stopped in the avenue.

"I should have had no just grounds for any suspicion," he concluded, "but I cannot say that I should not have suspected," and slowly he went on to the door.

He walked through the house into the billiard-room, and so became the witness of an incident which caused him an extraordinary disquiet. The room was empty. Mr. Twiss lit his pipe and took down a book from one of the shelves. A bright fire glowed upon the hearth, and drawing up a chair to the fender, he settled down to read. But the day was dull, and the fireplace stood at the dark end of the room. Mr. Twiss carried his book over to the window, which was a bay window with a broad seat. Now, the curtains were hung at the embrasure of the window, so that, when they were drawn, they shut the bay off altogether from the room, and when they were open, as now, they still concealed the corners of the window-seats. It was in one of these corners that Mr. Twiss took his seat, and there he read quietly for the space of five minutes.

At the end of that time he heard the latch of the door click, and looking out from his position behind the curtain, he saw the door slowly open. Archie Cranfield came through the doorway into the room, and shut the door behind him. Then he stood for a while by the door, very still, but breathing heavily. Mr. Twiss was on the point of coming forward and announcing his presence, but there was something so strange and secret in Cranfield's behaviour that, in spite of certain twinges of conscience, he remained hidden in his seat. He did more than remain hidden. He made a chink between the curtain and the wall, and watched. He saw Cranfield move swiftly over to the fireplace, seize a little old-fashioned clock in a case of satinwood which stood upon the mantelshelf, raise it in the air, and dash it with an ungovernable fury on to the stone hearth. Having done this unaccountable thing, Cranfield dropped into the chair which Mr. Twiss had drawn up. He covered his



“Lying in a heap upon the rug in front of the fire.”



face with his hands and suddenly began to sob and wail in the most dreadful fashion, rocking his body from side to side in a very paroxysm of grief. Mr. Twiss was at his wits' end to know what to do. He felt that to catch a man sobbing would be to earn his undying resentment. Yet the sound was so horrible, and produced in him so sharp a discomfort and distress, that, on the other hand, he could hardly keep still. The paroxysm passed, however, almost as quickly as it had come, and Cranfield, springing to his feet, rang the bell. Humphreys answered it.

"I have knocked the clock off the mantel-shelf with my elbow, Humphreys," he said. "I am afraid that it is broken, and the glass might cut somebody's hand. Would you mind clearing the pieces away?"

He went out of the room, and Humphreys went off for a dustpan. Mr. Twiss was able to escape from the billiard-room unnoticed. But it was a long time before he recovered from the discomfort and uneasiness which the incident aroused in him.

Four days later the two men left the house together. The servants had been paid off. Humphreys had gone with the luggage to London by an earlier train. Mr. Twiss and Archie Cranfield were the last to go. Cranfield turned the key in the lock of the front door as they stood upon the steps.

"I shall never see the inside of that house again," he said with a gusty violence.

"Will you allow me to get rid of it for you?" asked Mr. Twiss; and for a moment Cranfield looked at him with knotted brows, blowing the while into the wards of the key.

"No," he said at length, and, running down to the stream at the back of the house, he tossed the key into the water. "No," he repeated sharply; "let the house rot empty as it stands. The rats shall have their will of it, and the sooner the better."

He walked quickly to the gate, with Mr. Twiss at his heels, and as they covered the six miles to the railway station, very little was said between them.

#### IV.

TIME ran on, and Mr. Twiss was a busy man. The old house by the Stour began to vanish from his memory amongst the mists and the veils of rain which so often enshrouded it. Even the enigma of Captain Brayton's death was ceasing to perplex him, when the whole affair was revived in the most startling fashion. A labourer, making

a short cut to his work one summer morning, passed through the grounds of Cranfield's closed and shuttered house. His way led him round the back of the building, and as he came to that corner where the great brick buttresses kept the house from slipping down into the river, he saw below him, at the edge of the water, a man sleeping. The man's back was turned towards him; he was lying half upon his side, half upon his face. The labourer, wondering who it was, went down to the river-bank, and the first thing he noticed was a revolver lying upon the grass, its black barrel and handle shining in the morning sunlight. The labourer turned the sleeper over on his back. There was some blood upon the left breast of his waistcoat. The sleeper was dead, and from the rigidity of the body had been dead for some hours. The labourer ran back to the village with the astounding news that he had found Mr. Cranfield shot through the heart at the back of his own empty house. People at first jumped naturally to the belief that murder had been done. The more judicious, however, shook their heads. Not a door nor a window was open in the house. When the locks were forced, it was seen that the dust lay deep on floor and chair and table, and nowhere was there any mark of a hand or a foot. Outside the house, too, in the long neglected grass, there were but two sets of footprints visible, one set leading round the house—the marks made by the labourer on his way to his work—the other set leading directly to the spot where Archie Cranfield's body was found lying. Rumours, each contradicting the other, flew from cottage to cottage, and the men gathered about the police-station and in the street waiting for the next. In an hour or two, however, the mystery was at an end. It leaked out that upon Archie Cranfield's body a paper had been discovered, signed in his hand and by his name, with these words—

"I have shot myself with the same revolver with which I murdered Captain Brayton."

The statement created some stir when it was read out in the billiard-room, where the coroner held his inquest. But the coroner who presided now was the man who had held the court when Captain Brayton had been shot. He was quite clear in his recollection of that case.

"Mr. Cranfield's alibi on that occasion," he said, "was incontrovertible. Mr. Cranfield was with two friends in this very room when Captain Brayton shot himself in his bedroom. There can be no doubt of that." And under

his direction the jury returned a verdict of "Suicide while of unsound mind."

Mr. Twiss attended the inquest and the funeral. But though he welcomed the verdict, at the bottom of his mind he was uneasy. He remembered vividly that extraordinary moment when he had seen Cranfield creep into the billiard-room, lift the little clock in its case of satinwood high above his head, and dash it down upon the hearth in a wild gust of fury. He recollected how the fury had given way to despair—if it were despair and not remorse. He saw again Archie Cranfield dropping into the chair, holding his head and rocking his body in a paroxysm of sobs. The sound of his wailing rang horribly once more in the ears of Mr. Twiss. He was not satisfied.

"What should take Cranfield back to that deserted house, there to end his life, if not remorse," he asked himself—"remorse for some evil done there?" And over that question for some days he shook his head, finding it waiting for him at his fireside and lurking for him at the corner of the roads, as he took his daily walk between Hampstead and his office. It began to poison his life, a life of sane and customary ways, with eerie suggestions. There was an oppression upon his heart of which he could not rid it. On the outskirts of his pleasant world dim horrors loomed; he seemed to walk upon a frail crust, fearful of what lay beneath. The sly smile, the furtive triumph, the apparent consciousness of secret power—did they point to some corruption of the soul in Cranfield, of which none knew but he himself?

"At all events, he paid for it," Mr. Twiss would insist, and from that reflection drew, after all, but little comfort. The enigma began even to invade his business hours, and take a seat within his private office, silently clamouring for his attention. So that it was with a veritable relief that he heard one morning from his clerk that a man called Humphreys wished particularly to see him.

"Show him in," cried Mr. Twiss, and for his own ear he added: "Now I shall know."

Humphreys entered the room with a letter in his hand. He laid the letter on the office table. Mr. Twiss saw at a glance that it was addressed in Archie Cranfield's hand. He flung himself upon it and snatched it up. It was sealed by Cranfield's seal. It was addressed to himself, with a note upon the left-hand corner of the envelope—

"To be delivered after my death."

Mr. Twiss turned sternly to the man.

"Why did you not bring it before?"

"Mr. Cranfield told me to wait a month," Humphreys replied.

Mr. Twiss took a turn across the room with the letter in his hand.

"Then you knew," he cried, "that your master meant to kill himself? You knew, and remained silent?"

"No, sir, I did not know," Humphreys replied firmly. "Mr. Cranfield gave me the letter, saying that he had a long railway journey in front of him. He was smiling when he gave it me. I can remember the words with which he gave it: 'They offer you an insurance ticket at the booking-office, when they sell you your travelling ticket, so there is always, I suppose, a little risk. And it is of the utmost importance to me that, in the event of my death, this should reach Mr. Twiss.' He spoke so lightly that I could not have guessed what was on his mind, nor, do I think, sir, could you."

Mr. Twiss dismissed the man and summoned his clerk. "I shall not be in to anyone this afternoon," he said. He broke the seal and drew some closely written sheets of note-paper from the envelope. He spread the sheets in front of him with a trembling hand.

"Heaven knows in what spirit and with what knowledge I shall rise from my reading," he thought; and looking out of his pleasant window upon the barges swinging down the river on the tide, he was in half a mind to fling the sheets of paper into the fire. "But I shall be plagued with that question all my life," he added, and he bent his head over his desk and read.

## V.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am writing down for you the facts. I am not offering any explanation, for I have none to give. You will probably rise up, after reading this letter, quite incredulous, and with the conviction in your mind that you have been reading the extravagancies of a madman. And I wish with all my heart that you could be right. But you are not. I have come to the end to-day. I am writing the last words I ever shall write, and therefore I am not likely to write a lie.

"You will remember the little manor-house on the borders of Essex, for you were always opposed to my purchase of it. You were like the British jury, my friend. Your conclusion was sound, but your reason for it very far from the mark. You disliked it for its isolation and the melancholy of its

dripping trees, and I know not what other town-bred reasonings. I will give you a more solid cause. Picture to yourself the billiard-room and how it was furnished when I first took the house—the raised settee against the wall, the deep leather chairs by the fire, the high fender, and on the mantel-shelf—what?—a little old-fashioned clock in a case of satinwood. You probably never noticed it. I did from the first evenings which I passed in the house. For I spent those evenings alone, smoking my pipe by the fire. It had a queer trick. For a while it would tick almost imperceptibly, and then, without reason, quite suddenly, the noise would become loud and hollow, as though the pendulum in its swing struck against the wooden case. To anyone sitting alone for hours in the room, as I did, this tick had the queerest effect. The clock almost became endowed with human qualities. At one time it seemed to wish to attract one's attention, at another time to avoid it. For more than once, disturbed by the louder knocking, I rose and moved the clock. At once the knocking would cease, to begin again when I had settled afresh to my book, in a kind of tentative, secret way, as though it would accustom my ears to the sound, and so pass unnoticed. And often it did so pass, until one knock louder and more insistent than the rest would drag me in annoyance on to my feet once more. In a week, however, I got used to it, and then followed the strange incident which set in motion that chain of events of which to-morrow will see the end.

"It happened that a couple of my neighbours were calling on me. One of them you have met—Admiral Palkin, a prolix old gentleman, with a habit of saying nothing at remarkable length. The other was a Mr. Stiles, a country gentleman who had a thought of putting up for that division of the county. I led these two gentlemen into the billiard-room, and composed myself to listen while the admiral monologued. But the clock seemed to me to tick louder than ever, until, with one sharp and almost metallic thump, the sound ceased altogether. At exactly the same moment, Admiral Palkin stopped dead in the middle of a sentence. It was nothing of any consequence that he was saying, but I remember the words at which he stopped. 'I have often——' he said, and then he broke off, not with any abrupt start, or for any lack of words, but just as if he had completed all that he had meant to say. I looked at him across the fireplace, but his face wore its

usual expression of complacent calm. He was in no way put out. Nor did it seem that any new train of thought had flashed into his mind and diverted it. I turned my eyes from him to Mr. Stiles. Mr. Stiles seemed actually to be unaware that the admiral had stopped talking at all. Admiral Palkin, you will remember, was a person of consequence in the district, and Mr. Stiles, who would subsequently need his vote and influence and motor-car, had thought fit to assume an air of great deference. From the beginning he had leaned towards the admiral, his elbow upon his knee, his chin propped upon his hand, and his head now and again nodding a thoughtful assent to the admiral's nothings. In this attitude he still remained, not surprised, not even patiently waiting for the renewal of wisdom, but simply attentive.

"Nor did I move, for I was amused. The two men looked just like a couple of wax figures in Madame Tussaud's, fixed in a stiff attitude and condemned so to remain until the building should take fire and the wax run. I sat watching them for minutes, and still neither moved nor spoke. I never saw in my life a couple of people so entirely ridiculous. I tried hard to keep my countenance—for to laugh at these great little men in my own house would not only be bad manners, but would certainly do for me in the neighbourhood—but I could not help it. I began to smile, and the smile became a laugh. Yet not a muscle on the faces of my visitors changed. Not a frown overshadowed the admiral's complacency; not a glance diverted the admiring eyes of Mr. Stiles. And then the clock began to tick again, and, to my infinite astonishment, at the very same moment the admiral continued.

"—said to myself in my lighter moments— And pray, sir, at what are you laughing?' Mr. Stiles turned with an angry glance towards me. Admiral Palkin had resumed his conversation, apparently unaware that there had been any interval at all. My laughter, on the other hand, had extended beyond the interval, had played an accompaniment to the words just spoken. I made my excuses as well as I could, but I recognised that they were deemed insufficient. The two gentlemen left my house with the coldest farewells you can imagine.

"The same extraordinary incident was repeated with other visitors, but I was on my guard against any injudicious merriment. Moreover, I had no longer any desire to laugh. I was too perplexed. My visitors never seemed to notice that there had been a

lengthy interval or indeed any interval at all, while I, for my part, hesitated to ask them what had so completely hypnotised them.

"The next development took place when I was alone in the room. It was five o'clock in the afternoon. I had been out shooting a covert close to the house, and a few minutes after I had rung the bell, I remembered that I had forgotten some instructions which I had meant to give to the keeper. So I got up at once, thinking to catch him in the gun-room before he went home. As I rose from my chair, the clock, which had been ticking loudly—though, as I have said, it was rather a hollow, booming sound, as though the pendulum struck the wood of the case, than a mere ticking of the clock-work—ceased its noise with the abruptness to which I was growing used. I went out of the room into the hall, and I saw Humphreys with the tea-tray in his hands in the hall. He was turned towards the billiard-room door, but to my astonishment he was not moving. He was poised with one foot in the air, as though he had been struck, as the saying is, with a step half taken. You have seen, no doubt, instantaneous photographs of people in the act of walking. Well, Humphreys was exactly like one of

those photographs. He had just the same stiff, ungainly look. I should have spoken to him, but I was anxious to catch my keeper before he went away. So I took no notice of him. I crossed the hall quickly and went out by the front door, leaving it open. The gun-room was really a small building of corrugated iron, standing apart at the back of the house. I went to it and

tried the door. It was locked. I called aloud: 'Martin! Martin!'

"But I received no answer. I ran round the house again, thinking that he might just have started home, but I saw no signs of him. There were some outhouses which it was his business to look after, and I visited them, opening the door of each of them and calling him by name. Then I went down the drive to the gate, thinking that I might perhaps catch a glimpse of him upon the road, but again I was



"He seized a little old-fashioned clock, and dashed it with an ungovernable fury on to the stone hearth."

the tea-tray in his hands in the hall. He was turned towards the billiard-room door, but to my astonishment he was not moving. He was poised with one foot in the air, as though he had been struck, as the saying is, with a step half taken. You have seen, no doubt, instantaneous photographs of people in the act of walking. Well, Humphreys was exactly like one of

disappointed. I then returned to the house, shut the front door, and there in the hall still stood Humphreys in his ridiculous attitude with the tea-tray in his hands. I passed him and went back into the billiard-room. He took no notice of me whatever. I looked at the clock upon the mantelshelf, and I saw that I had been away just fourteen minutes. For fourteen minutes Humphreys had been

standing on one leg in the hall. It seemed as incredible as it was ludicrous. Yet there was the clock to bear me out. I sat down on my chair with my hands trembling, my mind in a maze. The strangest thought had come to me, and while I revolved it in my mind, the clock resumed its ticking, the door opened, and Humphreys appeared with the tea-tray in his hand.

"You have been a long time, Humphreys," I said, and the man looked at me quickly. My voice was shaking with excitement, my face, no doubt, had a disordered look.

"I prepared the tea at once, sir," he answered.

"It is twenty minutes by the clock since I rang the bell," I said.

"Humphreys placed the tea on a small table at my side and then looked at the clock. An expression of surprise came over his face. He compared it with the dial of his own watch.

"The clock wants regulating, sir," he said. 'I set it by the kitchen clock this morning, and it has gained fourteen minutes.'

"I whipped my own watch out of my pocket and stared at it. Humphreys was quite right; the clock upon the mantelshelf had gained fourteen minutes upon all our watches. Yes, but it had gained those fourteen minutes in a second, and that was the least part of the marvel. I myself had had the benefit of those fourteen minutes. I had snatched them, as it were, from Time itself. I had looked at my watch when I rang the bell. It had marked five minutes to five. I had remained yet another four minutes in the room before I had remembered my forgotten instructions to the keeper. I had then gone out. I had visited the gun-room and the outhouses, I had walked to the front gate, I had returned. I had taken fourteen minutes over my search—I could not have taken less—and here were the hands of my watch now still pointing towards five, still short of the hour. Indeed, as I replaced my watch in my pocket, the clock in the hall outside struck five.

"As you passed through the hall, Humphreys, you saw no one, I suppose?" I said.

"Humphreys raised his eyebrows with a look of perplexity. 'No, sir, I saw no one,' he returned, 'but it seemed to me that the front door banged. I think it must have been left open.'

"Very likely," said I. 'That will do,' and Humphreys went out of the room.

"Imagine my feelings. The clock had

given me fourteen minutes which it denied to all the world besides. Fourteen full minutes for me, yet they passed for others in less than the fraction of a second. And not once only had it made me this gift, but many times. The admiral's pause, unnoticed by Mr. Stiles, was now explained to me. He had not paused; he had gone straight on with his flow of talk, and Mr. Stiles had gone straight on listening. But between two of Admiral Palkin's words, Time had stood still for me. Similarly, Humphreys had not poised himself upon one ridiculous leg in the hall. He had taken a step in the usual way, but while his leg was raised, fourteen minutes were given to me. I had walked through the hall, I had walked back through the hall, yet Humphreys had not seen me. He could not have seen me, for there had been no interval of time for him to use his eyes. I had gone and come quicker than any flash, for even a flash is appreciable as some fraction of a second.

"I asked you to imagine my feelings. Only with those which I first experienced would you, from your sane and comfortable outlook upon life, have any sympathy, for at the beginning I was shocked. I had more than an inclination then to dash that clock upon the hearth and deny myself its bizarre and unnatural gift. Would that I had done so! But the inclination was passed, and was succeeded by an incredible lightness of spirit. I had a gift which raised me above kings, which fanned into a flame every spark of vanity within me. I had so much more of time than any other man. I amused myself by making plans to use it, and thereupon I suffered a disappointment. For there was so little one could do in fourteen minutes, and the more I realised how little there was which I could do in my own private special stretch of time, the more I wanted to do, the more completely I wished to live in it, the more I wished to pluck power and advantage from it. Thus I began to look forward to the sudden cessation of the ticking of the clock; I began to wait for it, to live for it; and when it came, I could make no use of it. I gained fourteen minutes now and then, but I lost more and more of the hours which I shared with other men. They lost their salt for me. I became tortured with the waste of those minutes of my own. I had the power; what I wanted now was to employ it. The desire became an obsession occupying my thoughts, harassing my dreams.

"I was in this mood when I passed Bray-

ton and yourself one evening in Pall Mall. I wrote to him that night, and I swear to you upon my conscience that I had no thought in writing but to put an end to an old disagreement, and re-establish, if possible, an old friendship. I wrote in a sudden revulsion of feeling. The waste of my days was brought home to me. I recognised that the great gift was no more than a perpetual injury. I proposed to gather my acquaintances about me, discard my ambition for some striking illustration of my power, and take up once more the threads of customary life. Yet my determination lasted no longer than the time it took me to write the letter and run out with it to the post. I regretted its despatch even as I heard it fall to the bottom of the pillar-box.

"Of my quarrel with Brayton I need not write at length. It sprang from a rancorous jealousy. We had been friends and classmates in the beginning. But as step by step he rose just a little above me, the friendship I had turned to gall and anger. I was never more than the second, he always the first. Had I been fourth or fifth, I think I should not have minded; but there was so little to separate us in merit or advancement. Yet there was always that little, and I dreaded the moment when he should take a bound and leave me far behind. The jealousy grew to a real hatred, made still more bitter to me by the knowledge that Brayton himself was unaware of it, and

need not have been troubled had he been aware.

"After I left the Army and lost sight of him, the flame burnt low. I believed it was extinguished when I invited him to stay with me; but he had not been an hour in the house when it blazed up within me. His success, the confidence which it had given him, his easy friendliness with strangers, the talk of him as a coming man, bit into my soul. The very sound of his footstep sickened me. I was in this mood when the clock began to boom louder and louder in the billiard-room. Chalmers and Linfield were talking. I did not listen to them. My heart beat louder and louder within my breast, keeping pace with the clock. I knew that in a moment or two the sound would cease, and the doors of my private kingdom would be open for me to pass through. I sat back in my chair waiting while the devilish inspiration had birth and grew strong. Here was the great chance to use the power I had—the only chance which had ever come to me. Brayton was writing letters in his room. The room was in a wing of the house. The sound of a shot would not be heard. There would be an end of his success; there would be for me such a triumphant use of my great privilege as I had never dreamed of. The clock suddenly ceased. I slipped from the room and went upstairs. I was quite leisurely. I had time. I was back in my chair again before seven minutes had passed.

"ARCHIE CRANFIELD."



## BOG OF ALLEN, IRELAND.

**O**H, beautiful the death that comes  
To patriots numbered with the just,  
'Mid pikes upraised, and roll of drums,  
And blood wide-spilt on the grey dust.

But lovelier far the peace that creeps  
Upon a land whence life has passed,  
Where every saint and patriot sleeps  
The sleep that soundest is and last.

Here in the luminous, ancient West,  
The long wide plain at eve expands  
Unto such rest, unto such rest  
As is not known in happier lands.

And dreaming of long-vanished eyes,  
Old voices, poets, hopes and joys,  
I shall see April's moon arise  
O'er the round towers of Clonmacnoise!

VICTOR PLARR.



# DRUSILLA PROPOSES.

BY RICHARD PRYCE,

*Author of "The Successor," "Jezebel," "The Quiet Mrs. Fleming," etc.*



NOTHING was further from her thoughts—nothing, indeed, was further from the thoughts of either of them. William was not even in the running—had not entered, so to speak, for the Drusilla stakes, and

Drusilla, if she had thought of him at all, and not taken him for granted, had always thought of him as her father's friend. To be sure, he was ten years younger than her father, and not much more than ten years older than herself, but—well, William was one of those dear, good-natured people whom young women of twenty-three do take for granted, when everyone else is at their feet.

And everyone else was at Drusilla's feet. She made conquests as other girls make plans. Her mother was tired of binding up broken hearts, for Drusilla's young men flocked to her for sympathy and comfort. She had almost a formula for them now.

"I know. But what *can* I do? She's Drusilla. You know that yourself. Yes, I know what you feel about it. But she's just Drusilla. Yes, as often as ever you like. We're always glad to see you. But I shouldn't be really kind if I let you think there was any hope."

There never was any hope, and when you had said that Drusilla was Drusilla, you had said all there was to say. Her mother did not pretend to understand her. When she was a girl, girls did not go on in this way.

"In what way?" said Drusilla.

"Being fallen in love with," said Drusilla's mother in English as "she" is only too often "spoke" in the home circle—or out of it, for that matter. "Being fallen in love with. Letting yourself be."

"Letting myself be being?" said Drusilla blandly.

"Well, you know what I mean," said Drusilla's mother, "which is more than I do what you do."

"Than you do what I——"

"Know what you mean, I mean," said Drusilla's mother impatiently. "Really, Drusilla, you *are* . . . ! What do you want? It isn't as if some of them weren't everything that your father and I could wish. I'm sure my heart quite bled for poor young Minsterley, and as for Mr. Hepplewaite, I hardly knew what to say to him. Really! Really!"

"You told him I was Drusilla, I suppose, and that you and papa would always——"

There was no confounding Drusilla, who had a good digestion and an even temper. It was the same always. Drusilla's primrose path was strewn with victims. She had as many "suitors" as a princess in a fairy story. They came, they saw, Drusilla conquered. But things reached a climax when the county's one person of real importance showed signs of devastation. It was all very well when it was Tom, Dick, and Harry; but when it came to Personages—and an estimable Personage, to boot, young, even, and (for a Personage) comparatively unspoilt, it seemed time for long-suffering parents to put their feet down. Drusilla's mother tried to plant hers. That made Drusilla laugh—albeit adorably. Drusilla's father blustered.

"This sort of thing can't go on for ever," said Drusilla's father. "You must either do one thing or the other—marry or not marry."

"Well, I am," said Drusilla.

"Am what? Are what?"

"Not marrying," said Drusilla.

"You're standing in your sisters' way," said Drusilla's mother. "How is one of them to get a chance while you behave like this?"

"I'm not behaving at all," said Drusilla—"I mean my behaviour has nothing to do with it."

"He is one of about half-a-dozen in all England," said her father. "You don't seem to realise the enormous compliment he's paying you. It's not every girl——"

"No, it isn't," said Drusilla.

"No, indeed, it is not," said her mother. "Not more than one in six, as your father says——"

"And, what's more, I won't let him take 'No' for an answer. My attitude is—and your mother's, too, let me tell you—that



"It was the size of the 'if' that did it."

you're a headstrong girl who doesn't know her own mind."

"Do you mean to say," said Drusilla, "that when I say 'No,' you'll tell him that I don't mean it?"

"Well, something of that sort," admitted Drusilla's father.

He blustered rather weakly, and Drusilla's mother could never stand long on what she called her two feet—as if it had been at her own discretion that she stood upon two instead of four.

"I shall send for William," said Drusilla's father outside the door.

\* \* \* \* \*

So it came that, a few days later, William, with his cheery red face and twinkling eyes, turned up. Drusilla's third sister, Elizabeth, met him at the station.

"What is it now?" he asked her, for he was generally sent for in emergencies. Drusilla's sister Elizabeth, who was seventeen and a little minx at that, told him in her own way.

William whistled.

"And she's refused him?"

"She's not to be allowed to."

"Allowed?" said William.

"Well, papa says she simply can't go on refusing everybody. This makes the I-don't-know-how-manyth, and mamma says she's standing in *our* way. Well, of course, she can't be allowed to do that. I wish I was Drusilla. So you've got to talk to her."

"Oh, I've got to talk to her, have I?"

"Like a father, you know—only not quite like papa. *He* can't talk to her for nuts or sour apples!"

\* \* \* \* \*

Like whose father it was exactly that William did talk to her the next morning will never be known. He had promised her own father overnight (to the accompaniment of an excellent cigar) to see what he could do. Her father's point was, my dear fellow, that there was a limit to everything. Neither he nor Drusilla's mother wished to bring the smallest pressure to bear upon her. But . . . And it Wasn't as If . . . And, Besides, . . . And then there were the other girls to think of, and it was All Very Well. Drusilla's father wasn't mercenary or a tuft-hunter, but what did Drusilla want?

"I'll see what I can do," said William.

"I wish you would, my dear fellow," said Drusilla's father.

The next morning, then, found William in Drusilla's sitting-room, which gave on to the lawn and got the morning sun, seeing what he could do.

"My dear Billy," said Drusilla, who looked ravishing in the morning, "don't pretend you thought of these things yourself. They're just the old stock family arguments."

"But, Drusilla dear," said William, "there's something to be said for them even if I didn't think of them myself."

"But why do you all want me married?" said Drusilla. "Isn't it rather horrid of you?"

"Oh, we don't want you married," said William, who even then did not know that he was speaking the truth. "Only don't you see you're playing the deuce and all with people's hearts and digestions——"

"Papa's expression."

"Havoc, then."

"Mamma's."

"—And if you're going to marry at all, here's a—a—— In short——"

"Well, I won't marry him," said Drusilla. "I dare say my head ought to be turned, but it isn't. I won't spend my life opening bazaars, and giving prizes, and being automatically the most important woman in the room. (I don't mind being that, and perhaps, in my heart of hearts, I think I generally manage to be, anyway!) I won't have to go in to dinner for the rest of my life with minor Royalties and Archbishops and Prime Ministers. I know he's got everything to give that anyone could possibly want, but I wouldn't marry him if—I can't think of an 'if' big enough. Why, Billy, I'd rather marry you!"

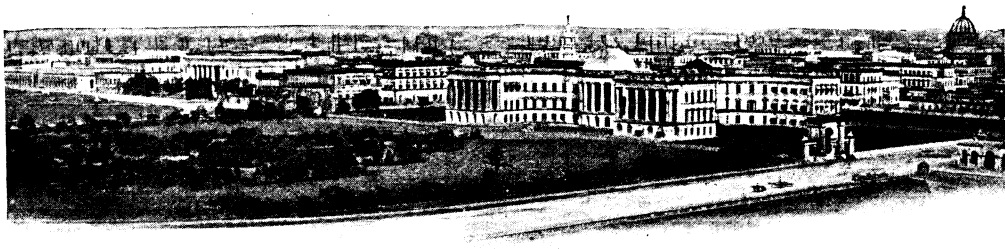
It was the size of the "if" that did it—the unmeant, unconscious, implied, and implicit insult.

"Oh, Billy, I didn't mean that!" said Drusilla.

William's red face was almost pale when she looked at him.

"Still, say it again," he said, as soon as he could steady his voice.

There was a strange moment then in which, in the sunlit room, Drusilla and William looked at each other in silence, and saw each other for perhaps the first time. They might have been strangers, so newly did each see the other. Was William really like this? Was this, in fact, William, this unknown man, clasping and unclasping strong-looking hands as he struggled with an emotion? Were those tears in Drusilla's conquering eyes? Her "victims" never saw tears. She gave a little gulp and fell on her knees at his. Things have happened in odder ways. It was William she married.



PANORAMA OF CALCUTTA, WITH GOVERNMENT HOUSE IN THE FOREGROUND.

## THE GRAND TRUNK ROAD.

BY FLORA ANNIE STEEL.

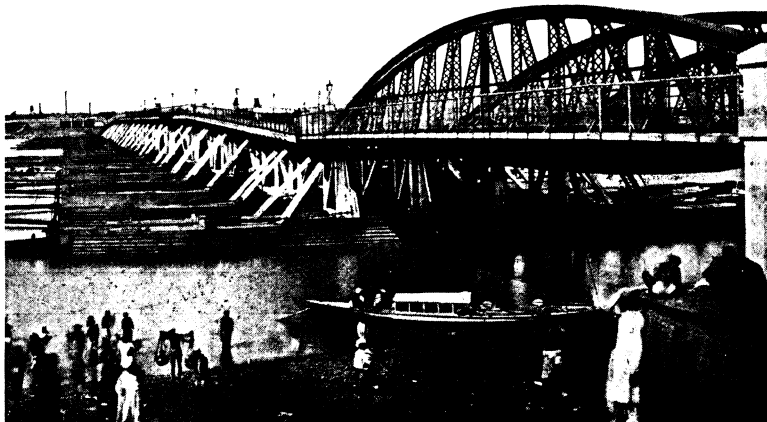
*Photographs by F. Frith & Co., Reigate.*

**E**VERY road has an interest of its own. Apart from the fact that, as Schiller points out, they all lead to the end of the world, there are a thousand thoughts about even a country lane which appeal instantly to the imagination. The funerals that have kept step along it, the brides in dainty attire who have driven through it, the lovers who, arm round waist, have sauntered in it by moonlight, the school children who, tempted by its blackberry, nest-set hedges, forget what they have learnt at every homeward step.

But of all roads in the world the so-called Grand Trunk Road, which stretches from Calcutta to Peshawar, is the most provocative of visions. Scarcely one of its long fourteen hundred and odd miles has not the power of conjuring up some great event in the past history of India, since for nearly

twice fourteen hundred years part of it, at any rate, has been the great artery of Hindustan, through which its life-blood has sped in varying rhythm.

Whether that oldest part of the great Royal Military Road, of which Strabo speaks, and along which the Greeks found their way as far south as Patna, really followed the exact line of the present modern, be-bridged, be-metalled highway, that in broad, white line, edged accurately with uniform trees, seems to claim all things visible as its own, it is impossible to say. Probably it does; for the plain of India is so wide, so vast, so level, that there is no difficulty in drawing a bee-line from one place to another. And once drawn, there is no further reason to alter it. Even modern engineers engaged in bridge-building could find small cause for realignment in a country where the streams



PONTOON BRIDGE, CALCUTTA.

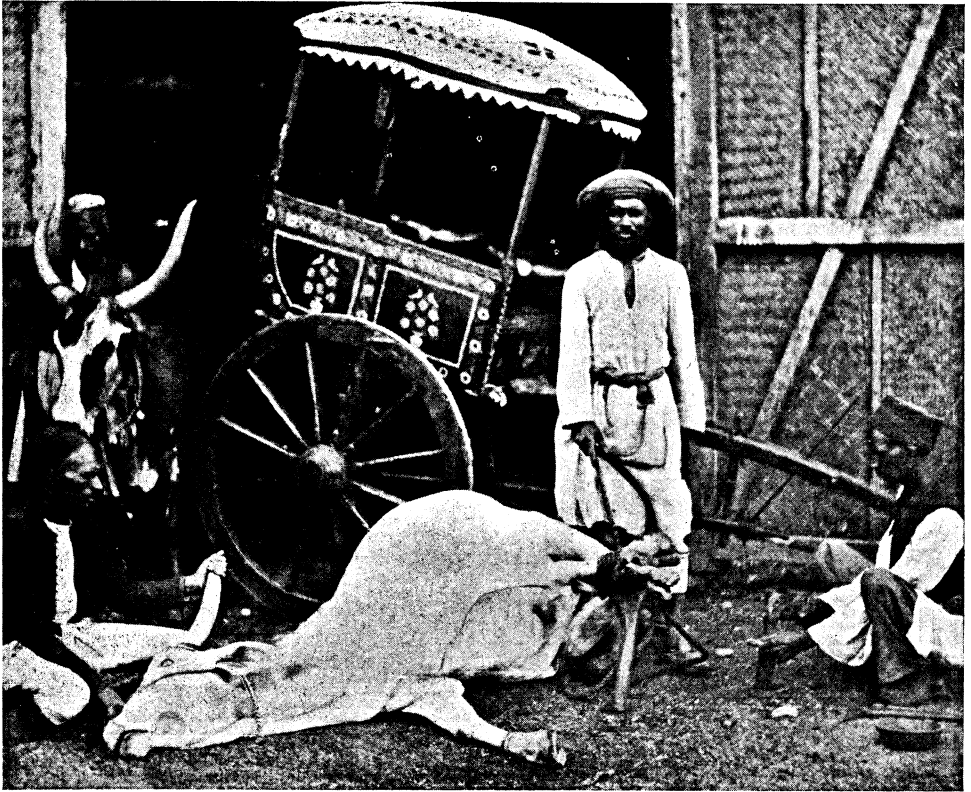
are everywhere alike—wide, shallow, low-banked.

So this stretch from the confluence of the rivers Beas and Sutlej to Patna, the ancient Palibothra, may well be the most vision-haunted of any.

As, the day's march over, we sit outside one of the two quaint circular gateway rooms that in every caravanserai are reserved for better class travellers, the moonlight, mingling with the dust that lingers from the feet of the many who have passed, sends a misty veil that, enveloping all things, makes the

south than we were yesterday when we sat in the moonlight outside just such another turret-room in just such another serai? Small wonder, either, this likeness, since all and every one of these shelters for the weary traveller were built to pattern by some potentate or another. Sher Shah alone, usurper for twelve years to the throne of the Moguls, built seventeen hundred of them!

Seventeen hundred serais, dotted down ten miles apart, each with its turreted, arched gateway, its wide cloistered enclosure,



A WAYSIDE SCENE: SHOEING BULLOCKS.

commonest object look unreal, unkenned. How vague it is, that broad, white road—three roads in one, hard metal in the middle, deepest dust down on either side—that stretches away unbroken to the horizon. North and south, east or west, to whichever point of the compass it trends, the variation of direction is so gradual that to the eye no faintest curve shows to hint at altered objective. Yet, despite this unchanging purpose, it is vague beyond words.

Are we, indeed, ten miles further north or

its central well. To-night we are in one of them; which, matters not at all, since all are similar. And those who shelter in them are similar also. The blaze of moonlight cutting all things to blackest shadow, to whitest light, shows us the cavernous darkness of each cloistered arch, broken here and there by the yellow radiance of a rushlight set in an earthenware saucer, pinched to the shape of a Roman lamp. Gloom and glare give a Rembrandtesque picture of dark faces around a central pipe-stem. From the

further corner drones the voice of the story-teller, more and more monotonous as his audience lessens to swell the number of white-sheeted forms, looking like corpses in their shrouds, which lie out in the moonlight among the laden carts. A tethered goat bleats feebly; the shapeless, squatting camels, immovable in body, sway their long necks incessantly over the fodder branches bundled before them.

of tree-sentinels, of which Sir Thomas Roe's chaplain writes that it is "one of the rarest and most beneficial works in the whole world."

Hush! Far off in the misty light to the north there is a sound of movement.

Who comes?

Since time and space are lost, surely we may dream awhile, and choose who out of the countless millions that have used the



WAYSIDE SNAKE CHARMERS.

So must the serai have looked any moonlight night these two thousand years back. So looks the serai ten miles further up the road; so looks the serai ten miles further down the road.

Time and place are lost. We are on the Grand Trunk Road. On either hand, losing clarity ere long in misty moonlit dust haze, stretches that broad, white metal, bordered by sandy side-tracks, edged by double rows

Road shall come along it to-night. Shall it be a phalanx of well-greaved Greeks, "singing hymns in honour of Dionysus, the great God of Spring, of Joy, of Fertility"—Greeks led by a stern, grave man, who dreams of a Promised Land?

Listen! Our fancy must be fact, for from afar come chanting voices and the rhythm of balanced step.

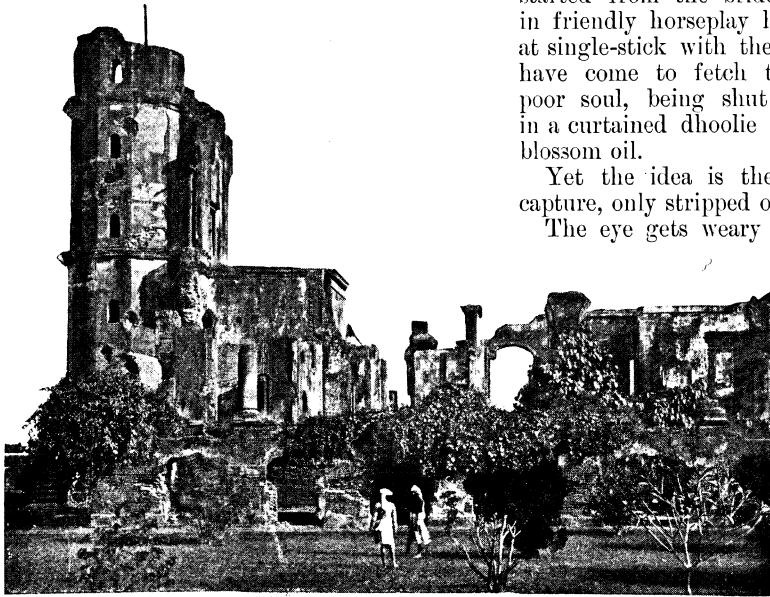
No! Out of the moonshiny mist comes



a common enough sight : a band of pilgrims marching to the Ganges led by their *guru*, or spiritual teacher, clad in saffron colour, each with his staff; many carrying, on bamboo yokes, baskets containing the ashes of the dead who have died during the past year; they keep step to their cry of "*Hari Ganga! Hari Ganga!*"

Strange persistency of thought! They also are seeking a promised land, a land where sin shall be no more, and their cry is also to the great Earth Mother who brings fertility. Humanity was the same then as now.

But hearken once again. From the south comes a hurried sound of horses' hoofs, voices



THE RESIDENCY, LUCKNOW.

of tumult, and a noise as of blows. Can this be the romantic ride of Prithve Raj when he carried off the fair Princess Sanyogata, willing captive to his many charms? What a delightful story it is, second to none, surely, in the annals of true lovers. How Prince Prithve, flower of chivalry, having offended the pretty princess's father, was not asked to the ceremony of her maiden's choice of a husband, a miserable clay image of him being, in mockery, put to do the menial work instead. How the spirited young girl, given the bridal chaplet which was to mark her choice, passed all the magnificent suitors by, went straight to the clay door-keeper and hung the precious gift round its neck, to the anger of all the disappointed monarchs

and the impotent despair of her parents. How Prithve, the *preux chevalier* of India, hearing of the young girl's courage, rode off at hot haste to Kananj, carried her off, and fought a rear-guard action for her every foot of the way back to Delhi, leaving behind him, one by one, dead or dying, half his friends, half the sinews of India. But Sanyogata was safe, to be his dearest dear, his closest companion, his wisest counsellor. Shall we see her to-night, her hair unbound, her face unveiled, her lovely form all hung with flower chaplets after the fashion of the ancient time?

No! The mist discloses nothing but an ordinary marriage procession; one but now started from the bride's village; for see! in friendly horseplay her relations are still at single-stick with the groom's escort, who have come to fetch the girl away; she, poor soul, being shut out of all the fun in a curtained dhoolie that reeks of orange-blossom oil.

Yet the idea is the same—marriage by capture, only stripped of its romance.

The eye gets weary watching. The long trails of corn-laden carts, which in this hot weather choose the cooler night-time for progression, creak past wearily. They seem endless. The slow circling of the wheels, the gentle swaying of the heads of the oxen beneath the yoke, are the only signs of move-

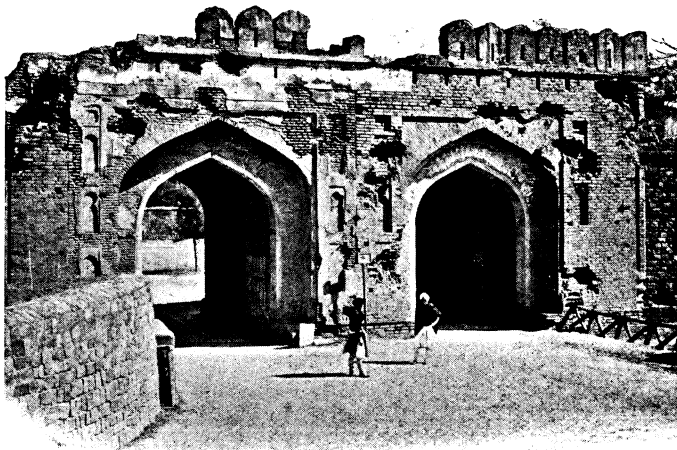
ment. Another and another and another, always interminable, always the same. Yet they are a veritable army marching to slay hunger somewhere, as countless armies have marched and counter-marched along this road to slay content.

Truly nothing passes along the Grand Trunk Road but has its counterpart in the past. Here, swift, uneven, with the curious rhythmical jerk of men moving rapidly, comes, sheeted down to a loose string bed, the body of a man who, dying at a village down the road, is being taken to his own *buste* to be burnt at dawn.

With just that rhythmic jerk, doubtless, though with more semblance of state, was the body of the Emperor Baber, after his

death at Agra, carried northwards along this road to the snow-clad hills he loved so well, there to rest beside his mother in the Garden of the New Year; his mother whom he had

to build the splendid caravanserais which still exist between Delhi and the Kashmir Hills. For Nurjehan, the woman he loved, was of the mountains, and year after year they spent their summers in the mulberry and quince gardens of the Dhal lake. What an ap-  
panage must theirs not have been in their bi-yearly journeyings up and down the Grand Trunk Road! We get some idea of it from the pages of the "Acts of Akbar," Jahangir's father, where the long lists of things necessary to an emperor's camping equipment fill page after page. Some idea of the amount of carriage required may be gathered from the fact that the emperor's audience tent alone covered a space of over two acres.



CASHMERE GATE, DELHI.

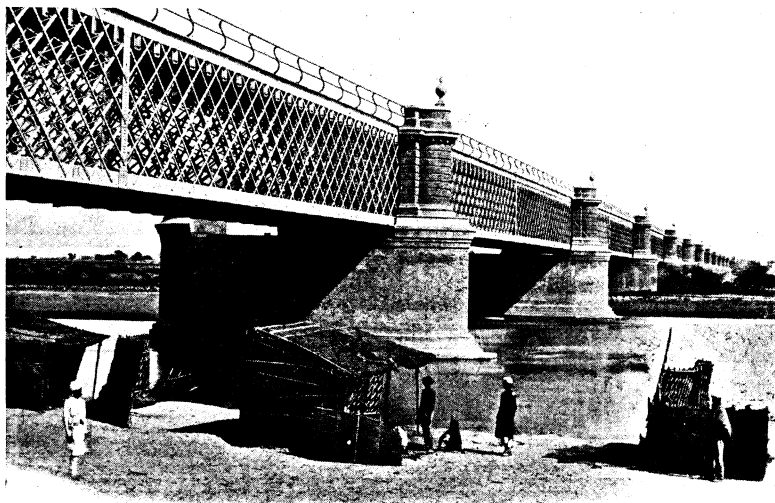
helped to carry shoulder-high to her grave amid the scented violets, the tulips, the narcissi, whose beauties Baber was never tired of recalling.

Incomparable Baber! Most delightful of all characters in history, you give the Grand Trunk Road one unique vision, not to be matched, anciently, modernly, try as we may. A mighty emperor, turbanless, in his slipper shoon, just as the news of approach found him, running unattended for six miles through the dust to meet the mother of his four children, the woman of whom he says simply in his diary: "To-night at midnight, after a long time, I met Mahum again." It would be sacrilege to add a single word to that story.

Another kind of love, less unworldly, but none the less potent for good, was that which prompted the Emperor Jahangir

So the Grand Trunk Road must have been crowded to overflowing on the moonlit nights of May and October.

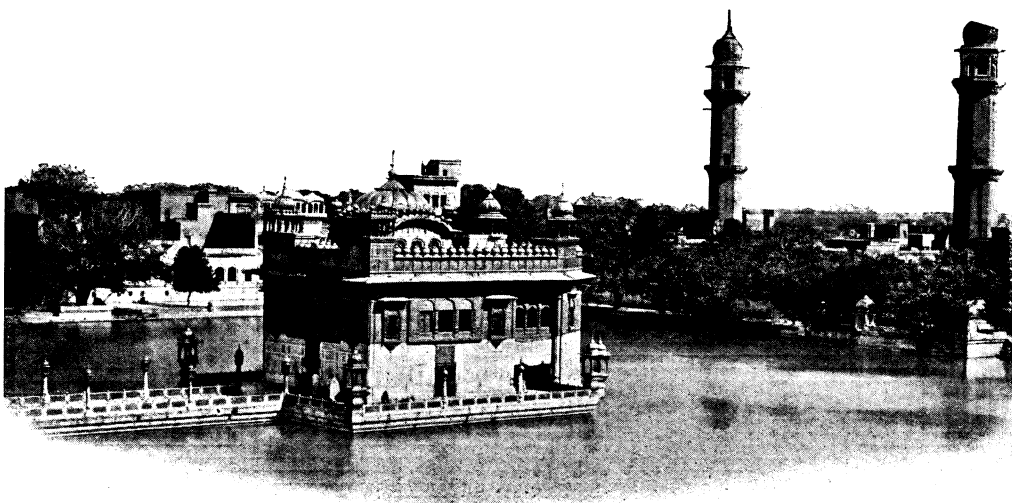
How different from that moonlit night in May, 1857, when the beleaguered garrison of Delhi looked down the broad, white



THE BRIDGE OVER WHICH THE ROAD PASSES AT DELHI.

road that led to Meerut, only to find it empty!

Empty! ye gods above! And every Indian road is so full at all times of the day



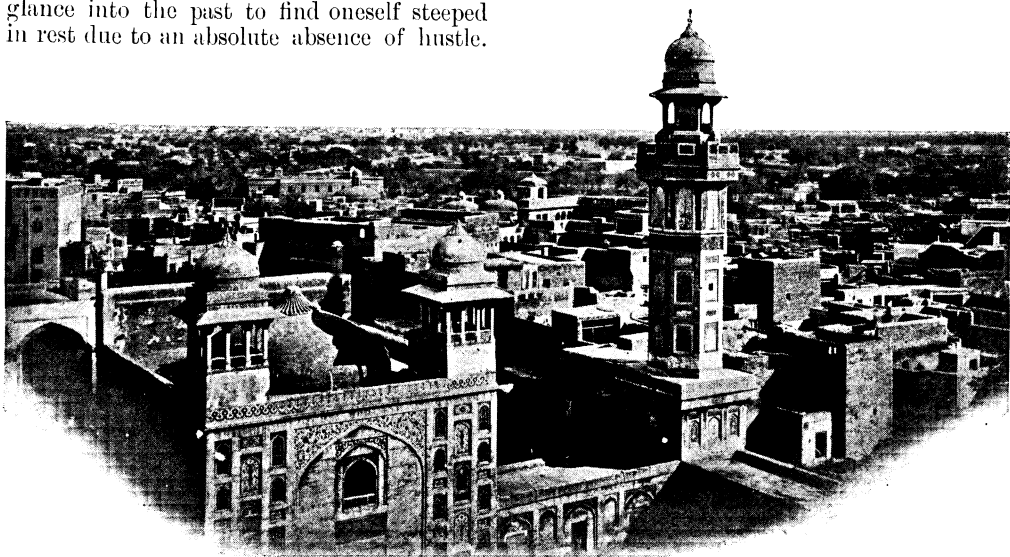
GOLDEN TEMPLE, AMRITSAR.

and night. The railway may pass by it—may even for miles and miles run alongside it complete in transport facilities for traders—yet still the great wains follow each other in slow, endless sequence, while the drivers sleep in the soft shifting corn, until, hey, presto! in these later times, sounds the quick toot of a motor horn, the sleepers wake, the oxen jib, as with a perfect dust-storm, due to a necessary swerve off the metal, the latest product of Western workshops sweeps by.

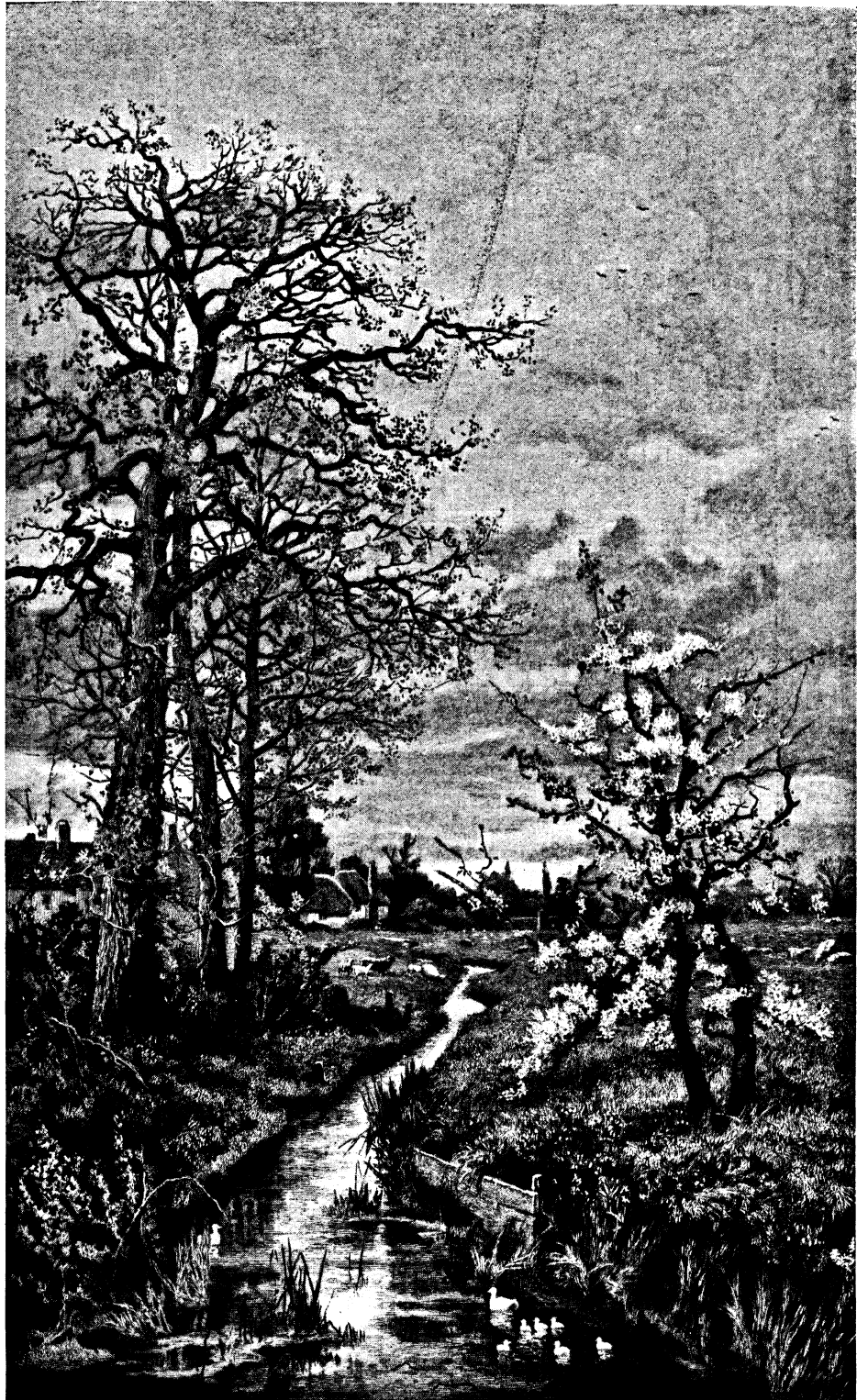
But even *it* cannot really disturb the calm of the Grand Trunk Road. It only needs a glance into the past to find oneself steeped in rest due to an absolute absence of hustle.

In 1852 it took Lord Roberts three months and some days to go from Calcutta to Peshawar. It is but a night's journey now, by rail, but Mrs. Fanny Parkes took fifty-one days to go from Allahabad to Agra in 1854. It was a long time, but the wonder comes—could the days have been better spent?

Certainly, at this present, a few days' marching along the Grand Trunk Road could teach many people many things—notably that, despite Councils and Congresses, India still clings to the customs of the past.



LAHORE.



"SPRING." BY CHARLES F. ALLBON.

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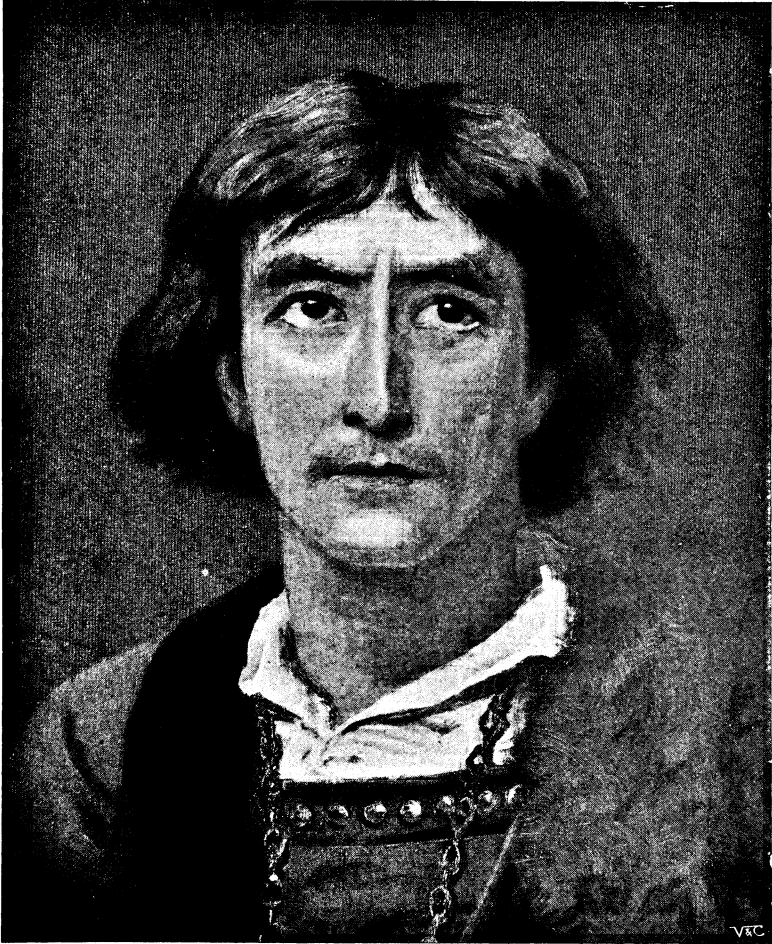
# FATHER AND SON

THE TWO IRVINGS IN THE SAME RÔLES.

BY AUSTIN BRERETON.

IT is an old axiom that circumstances alter cases. Thus, in the world of commerce, it is the custom for a son to succeed his father and to carry on the

to inquire too curiously and somewhat needlessly. The ordeal of constant comparison is, however, one of the trials of an artist placed in such a position; and to



SIR HENRY IRVING AS HAMLET. FROM THE PORTRAIT BY EDWIN LONG, R.A.

*Reproduced from the engraving published by Messrs. Goupil & Co.*

traditions of the house. But on the stage, as in literature and art, the conditions are so peculiar that a son who inherits a great name is possessed of a blessing which has certain disadvantages. To inquire into those conditions and disadvantages would be

emerge with credit from such comparison is one of the ambitions of an actor. Many people, no doubt, since the death of Sir Henry Irving in 1905, went to see his elder son partly out of curiosity. It is, however, but bare justice to Mr. H. B. Irving to recall

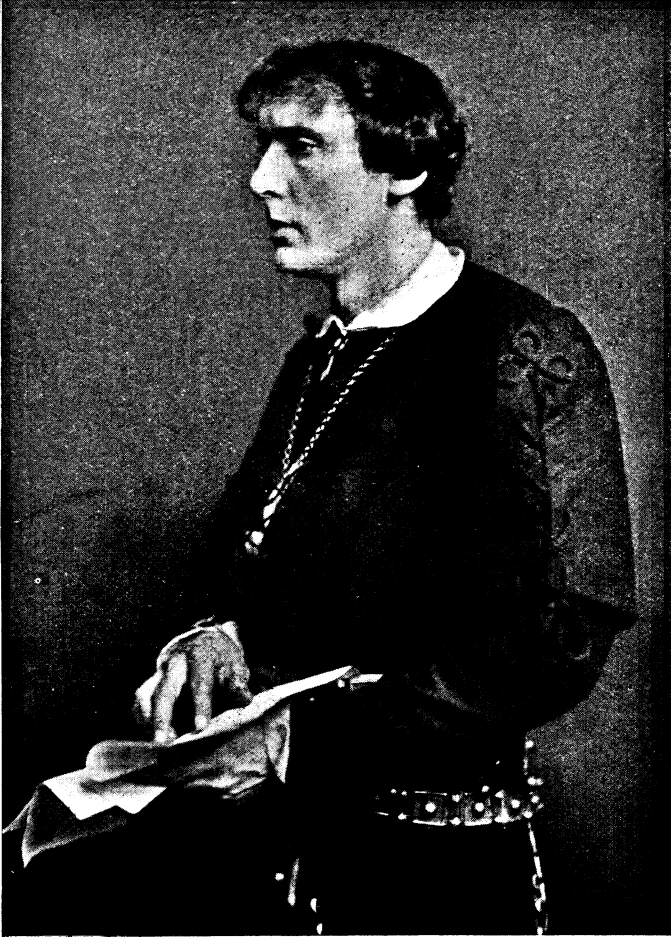
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that he had won much popularity in his early career in the provinces by his acting of such prominent characters as Hamlet, Othello, Romeo, Benedick, Orlando, Charles Surface, Young Marlow, and Claude Melnotte. Moreover, some years before the decease of his father, he had made his mark in London. On October 25, 1897, to be precise, he created an impression which augured well for his future on the stage by his impersonation of the cynical Loftus Roupell in "The Tree of Knowledge," at the St. James's Theatre. There, quite unconsciously, without premeditation, he was following in his father's footsteps, for, as Miss Carlotta Addison, who had played with Henry Irving on the same stage in 1867, and was now playing with the son, avouched, he recalled his father's acting as Rawdon Scudamore in "Hunted Down" of thirty years before. Indeed, if a son inherits certain of the characteristics of his father, it is difficult to avoid resemblance. Nor is there any valid reason why he should endeavour to do so. Moreover, in the present instance, be it noted, Mr. Irving has his own individuality, an individuality largely composed of charm, and this enables him, in playing parts closely

identified with his father, to give another complexion to certain phases of the characters.

In using the word "charm" in connection with Mr. Irving's acting, I do so as the result of frequent observation and upon due consideration. Perhaps the best instance which I can give of this personal characteristic is to note the difference between father and son in regard to speech-making

before the public. We all know that for many years before his death it was a habit of the public to demand speeches from Henry Irving upon all and every occasion—and many times without occasion save for the real love of the man. His speeches at first and last nights at the Lyceum, in the old days, were part and parcel of the evening's entertainment. And admirable speeches they were, too! But to get the exact parallel between father and



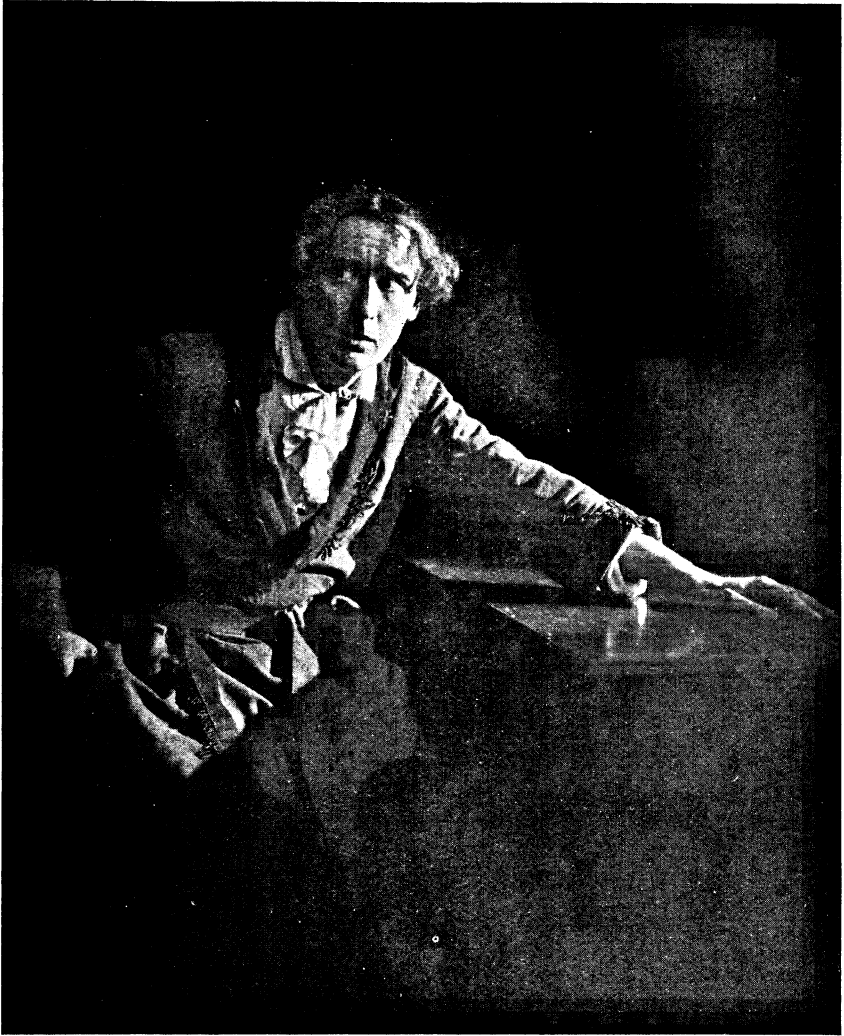
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[Raphael Tuck & Sons.

MR. H. B. IRVING AS HAMLET.

son in this respect, it is necessary to refer to the more impromptu speeches of recent times, those few words of graciousness which were made night after night in the provinces. They had their charm, of course, but it was the charm of the conqueror. Irving the First stood before the audience calm, deliberate, unmoved. He impressed by his magnetism, by his dominant will-power, by





*Photo by]*

MR. H. B. IRVING AS MATHIAS IN "THE BELLS."

*[Ellis & Walery.*

the air of the man who has accomplished his purpose. His smile on these occasions was rare and beautiful. But it was very rare. On the other hand, Irving the Second comes rapidly, almost breathlessly, before the curtain. There is little or no premeditation in his remarks. He says what he feels, quickly, thankfully, graciously. He has inherited his father's beautiful smile, but he is lavish of it. He is, in fact, electrical in his expression, where his father was, with design, quite deliberate. This individuality lends its charm to his performances, and enables him, together with his capacity for thinking for himself, to re-create the characters in which other actors have excelled.

Take him, for instance, as Hamlet, which he acted for the first time in London on April 4, 1905. Here he had to follow, not only his father, but a long line of Hamlets, of all sorts and conditions—for the Prince of Denmark is the ambition of all actors of serious intent—from Shakespeare's day to our own. It was but natural that the younger Irving should be compared with his father in the character, although many of the latter-day public and critics had been debarred from witnessing that triumphant impersonation, as Henry Irving, reluctant to spoil the impression which his interpretation had created, would not act the part in his later years. But the memory of it lingered.



*Photo by]*

*[The London Stereoscopic Co.*

SIR HENRY IRVING AS MATHIAS IN "THE BELLS."

And many of us recalled its depth of feeling, its intensity, its occasional flash of passion, and that quality which we call princeliness. But the Hamlet of the father had an intense loneliness. He was a veritable prince in the sense that he was a man apart, one raised above his fellows by his courtly air, his position, his aloofness. Albeit he was very human, he impressed by his air of separation from his fellow-men. The scenes with Ophelia were extremely beautiful in their tenderness, and his treatment of Horatio was marked by deep feeling. Above all, he was profoundly melancholy. That, at least, is the impression which is uppermost in my

mind when I think of Irving's Hamlet—profoundly melancholy, infinitely sad, piteous in its separation from sympathy, yet entirely sympathetic. It is we who are Hamlet, says Hazlitt, and it was the Hamlet within him, his own loneliness, which dominated the impersonation of the father.

The Hamlet of the son recalls that of the father in many important respects. It, too, is full of fine feeling, it has its passionate note—as in the celebrated Play scene—it has intensity of an order which, by comparison, is subdued; it has great tenderness for Ophelia. It is a much more youthful Hamlet than, I imagine, his father's ever



SIR HENRY IRVING AS LOUIS XI.  
*From a drawing by Fred Barnard.*

was. And it is certainly extremely lovable. The Hamlet of the Irving of our day has two paramount features, youth and loveliness. It has not the profound melancholy of the father, but it is a most engaging picture. Hamlet can be interpreted in divers ways, and by actors of varying personality. Discussion on this or that point will last until the crack of doom. But so long as

the actor brings home to us something of the nature of Hamlet, something of his distinction, something of that fine nature overburdened with a terror sufficient to unseat the reason and impair the soul, we must be grateful. Irving the First did this by, above and beyond other means, his deep-seated melancholy. The son impresses us and draws us to him by the loveliness



*Photo by]*

*[Ellis & Watery.*

MR. H. B. IRVING AS LOUIS XI.

which dominates his Hamlet. This quality, manifest in his earlier performance, had developed in February, 1909, when he acted the character at the Shaftesbury Theatre. Indeed, one of the most valuable gifts which the second Irving inherits from his father is the capacity for taking infinite pains, for developing that which was already good. He is never content to rest upon his laurels. Again, he can think for himself, and in adopting, in the second act, the sequence of scenes according to the early quarto of 1603,

he made a most effective change in the acting version, and one whereby he made a considerable improvement on accepted renderings of the tragedy.

Those playgoers who remember the Hamlet of the first Irving are few and far between. When, however, we come to some of his other impersonations, especially in regard to characters which he made his own, the case is different. And the man who elects to essay them nowadays must inevitably bear the brunt of comparison. It was, therefore, a



MR. H. B. IRVING AS CHARLES I.

*Photograph by Ellis & Walery.*



SIR HENRY IRVING AS CHARLES I.

*From the portrait by J. Archer in the Collection of Sir Merion Russell-Cotes, J.P., F.R.G.S.*



bold step when Mr. H. B. Irving undertook to act Mathias, Lesurques and Dubosc, Charles I. and Louis XI. He had played all those parts before coming with them to London in the autumn of the year before last. It was on Thursday, October 15, 1908, that he opened the Shaftesbury Theatre with "The Lyons Mail." In many quarters the experiment was not regarded as promising. Mr. Irving had done much good work in London before that, and, amongst other things, a fine performance of Iago at the Lyric Theatre, in the early part of 1906, stood to his credit. But he was chiefly remembered by his Admirable Crichton in Mr. J. M. Barrie's comedy. As for challenging comparisons with his father before a London audience, that was too rash to think of unmoved. But what happened? The first-night audience cheered the young actor to the echo, a six weeks' lease was extended to five months, and "The Lyons Mail" was applauded for one hundred and twenty-five consecutive performances, the longest run ever achieved by the play.

By some people the Lesurques of the younger actor is considered superior to that of his father, while others think his Dubosc the better performance. For my own part, and I am equally familiar with the different renderings, I think it is all a question of personal opinion. In the first act, the father had a certain grim humour, a devilish malignity which, in the son, becomes more jocular, especially in the scene of the breaking

open of the cash-box and the division of the spoil. It is altogether in a lighter vein. In the second and third acts the difference is greater still. The elder Irving so magnified the virtue of Lesurques in the accusation scene that Lesurques became an ideal creature whom no one could, by any possible pressure of evidence, be brought to

think guilty of an atrocious crime. His Lesurques was a saint upon earth. In the case of the son, the audience, who know that Lesurques is innocent, do not blame the magistrate for doubting that fact. This effect is due to a difference of treatment. It may yet come to pass that the son also will idealise Lesurques. At present, and it is a perfectly correct view of the character, he keeps Lesurques as a man of ourselves, one upon whom such a blow might fall at any moment. He does this without any loss of dignity or sympathy. Indeed, I think that he arouses far greater sympathy in this part than was created by his father. The father idealised: the son is quite natural. This observation is not to detract from the merit of the father. Henry Irving applied to drama the same method of idealisation which made him ever a romantic figure on the stage, even in



SIR HENRY IRVING AS DUBOSC IN "THE LYONS MAIL."

*From a drawing by John Fullerylove.*

parts which were entirely unsuited to him. He did this with Lesurques, in the second act especially, whereas the son, laying stress upon the purely domestic side of the character, makes us feel the cruelty of the accusation, although we must be in accord with the justice of the condemnation. His affection for his daughter and his horror at his



Photo by]

[Ellis &amp; Walery.

MR. H. B. IRVING AS LESURQUES IN "THE LYONS MAIL."

father's belief in his guilt are fine touches in a performance of great beauty.

In one particular instance, the difference of treatment by father and son is most marked. At the end of the second act of "The Lyons Mail," Henry Irving's Lesurques, utterly overcome by the accusation, the damning evidence, and the threat of the elder Lesurques, paused for a few moments, and, as he exclaimed "God sees us both and knows it is a lie," the man became transformed into a saint, and his face wore a look of rapture. The Lesurques of to-day takes the situation with great rapidity, and the sentence is spoken, by comparison, at any rate, very quickly. The same effect is obtained, but by different means. Again, the garret scene, which concludes the play, shows a wide difference of treatment. There were times when the Dubosc of the elder Irving seemed like a demon, a terrible denizen of another world, full of malignity. It was, also, a performance that was very deliberate in its every phase. The Dubosc of Mr. H. B. Irving is not so supremely devilish as that of his father. He seems

to have an almost boyish relish in kicking and cuffing the miserable Fouinard, and it is not until Dubosc turns on that wretched creature, at the mention of Lesurques' name, that we see how truly malignant this Dubosc really is. In this character, as in Lesurques, Mr. H. B. Irving represents a younger man. The play gains in consequence—in sympathy for Lesurques, and in a feeling of relief that such a monster as Dubosc has been cut short in his career of crime.

In "The Bells," with which Mr. Irving began—at the Queen's Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue, in September, 1909—his second season as a London manager, there is as great a difference of treatment as in "The Lyons Mail." The Mathias of his father is a performance of world-wide renown, and is well remembered by countless thousands of playgoers. It is far better known than the same actor's Lesurques and Dubosc, as Henry Irving acted "The Bells" until the end of his days, and much more frequently than "The Lyons Mail." So that the venture at the Queen's was much more daring than that at the Shaftesbury Theatre. But the



Photo by]

[Ellis &amp; Walery.

MR. H. B. IRVING AS DUBOSC IN "THE LYONS MAIL."

son came through the ordeal with flying colours. It was, indeed, an evening of triumph for him, for he had to combat something more difficult to overthrow than mere prejudice—the personal affection in which the memory of his father in this part is held by so many people. My own feelings in this respect are those of many others, and are indicative of the general thought in regard to the son playing this most famous of his father's parts. It so happened that I was at Scarborough at the end of August in the year 1907, during the week that Mr. H. B. Irving was acting there. I entered the theatre with feelings which are difficult to express. For I had known the father for a long period, and I had seen Sir Henry Irving play Mathias a few days before his death. It was but natural that old memories should be stirred, that fond remembrances should be awakened in such circumstances. But before the first act had ended, I was so interested in the work of the son that I felt how good a thing it was to be the son of such a father, and to be able to follow in his footsteps, worthily, but not slavishly. For here was a Mathias stamped, as was his father's before him, with his own individuality. One missed certain bits of "business," as, for instance, the long pause and the intense look of apprehension with which the first Mathias greeted the mention of the Polish Jew in the first act. Nor did Mr. H. B. Irving make as much of the counting of Annette's dowry, particularly in connection with the piece of old gold, "from the girdle," as did his father. In fact, the acting of the son, although no less carefully thought out, is less deliberate than that of his father. This difference in method was much more noticeable then than now, and it proved a great advantage when the younger actor first took upon himself those parts so allied with his father.

It is his own individuality, however, which is the real secret of his success, and this was so apparent at Scarborough that his Mathias became a character of his own. Apart from details, the marked difference in his treatment of Mathias is found in the domestic side of the character and in the Dream scene. His Mathias is much more affectionate for wife and daughter than was his father's. And in the last act he is much more vigorous, although not more intense, than was his father. Sir Henry Irving, in his later years, at any rate, took this terrible scene with comparative quiet, relying for his effect upon the air of mystery and fatality with which he invested

it. The son presents a younger Mathias, one who lives in awful fear, but whose vitality prevents him from being too tragic a figure.

When we come to Charles the First and Louis XI., it is extremely difficult to say wherein the performances of father and son differ. In make-up, both being based upon the same historic models, they are identical. In the last act of "Charles the First," and throughout "Louis XI.," it seems as though the father had come to life again, so close is the resemblance. It is only when Mr. Irving speaks that we know it is not his father who is before us. For his voice is much stronger, much more resonant than was his father's. None of us can ever forget the mournful beauty of Sir Henry Irving's Charles the First, or the grim humour and final terror of his Louis. The son is happy in reviving those memories, and the playgoers of the younger generation are fortunate in being able to catch a glimpse, through the son, of his great father.

Now that Mr. Irving has come into his own, so to speak, with his thrilling impersonation in "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," in which his acting is "original" in every sense of the word, it must be evident that he can think and act for himself. Even the most prejudiced of observers must admit this truth. As for acting his father's parts, why should he not do so, especially as he is able to stamp them with his own individuality? He does not copy his father in any slavish way. His performances are his own, and should be judged as such. If he were to be debarred from playing parts associated with his father, his future career would be needlessly limited. In the time to come he should give us certain Shakespearean characters in which he ought to excel, such as Benedick, Richard III., and Macbeth. The fact of the father having acted these characters should make the son's performance of them all the more interesting. For Mr. H. B. Irving is no mere imitator. In height and facial appearance, and in certain gestures, he recalls his father very vividly at times, on the stage as in private life. He does this unconsciously, by right of heredity. He has inherited from his father many valuable gifts—the father's expressive hands are reproduced in those of the son—and he is right in using these gifts to the best advantage. He stamps everything with his own individuality, so that Hamlet and Mathias, Louis and Lesurques, Jekyll and Hyde, and whatever other character he may play, become his own. Thus the ambition of the actor becomes justified by his achievement.

# BIANCA'S DAUGHTER.

By JUSTUS MILES FORMAN,

Author of "*The Garden of Lies*," "*Tommy Carteret*," "*The Quest*," etc.

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.—The two Blakes, father and son, shared most of each other's tastes and moods—for the two men had been a great deal together for some ten years after the son had left the University, and had travelled much together in remote parts of the world—and out of their very sympathy the younger man, Richard Blake, became aware that his father seemed strangely oppressed with either physical pain or mental anxiety in the midst of Mrs. Cartwright's ballroom, and this impression seemed due to the sudden pointing out of a *débutante*, a Miss Vittoria Fleming, whose rare beauty was the talk of the room. But the older man declared himself only bored, after all, and Richard speedily forgot the circumstance in the new interest of dance and conversation with the beautiful Miss Fleming, who had hitherto lived all her life at the country seat of her father. On her mother's side she was descended from a distinguished Italian family, but since that mother's death her father, Pender Fleming, had lived the life of a complete recluse, and Bianca's daughter was now entering the larger world beyond her Hampshire home for the first time. She and Richard Blake at this first meeting became conscious of some influence binding their lives together for good or ill, but on his return home from the dance, Blake found his father anxious to persuade him to embark on a long foreign cruise. He talked to his father of the dance and of the arresting beauty and rare personality of Miss Fleming, only to draw from the older man an agitated entreaty that he would not allow himself to fall in love with the girl. Simultaneously Vittoria was asking her hostess many questions about the mother whom she had never known, and, incidentally, some about her new friend. Yet neither the man nor the girl learned anything that could have explained either the distress of the elder Blake or Mrs. Dudley's reluctance to answer Vittoria's questions at all frankly. Then Blake and Vittoria met again at a dinner-party, without becoming any better acquainted; but later on he happened to be in the Park when the girl's horse bolted, and succeeded in stopping the frightened animal while Vittoria cleared her foot from the stirrup by which she was being dragged, and their friendship seemed to be developed by this open moment of danger and rescue. Even then, however, circumstances prevented Blake from seeing the girl again before she left town. Vittoria was welcomed home by her father and his neighbour, Beau Temple, "the novelist of the chosen few," and her own lifelong friend, who had only been awaiting her return from her first season in the great world to ask her if she could come to look upon him as a husband. To her father, when he urged her to accept the proposal, the girl said: "I'm very fond of him. The only question is, am I fond enough, and in the right way? I dare say I am." But all the time she wondered why Richard Blake had disappeared out of her life again without word or sign. She looked ahead to her probable marriage with a calm and contented mind. Its only alternative appeared to be an indefinite continuation of her lonely life at Standish, and the months in London had taught her how intolerable that would be. Moreover, she could imagine going through life with him very happily indeed. But one day she rode over to call on the Farings, and found Blake there, on a visit, and realised the ascendancy he had established over her, yet without acknowledging it. So she returned and told Beau Temple definitely that she would marry him. Then, in the leisure of her country life, she obtained access to an unused room in which she found a portrait of the Italian mother whom she had never known, and was amazed to find how closely the picture resembled herself. Yet her father had never alluded to it. But the drama of her life was to be carried an act further by a visit from Blake, who explained his own silence and asked her to marry him. And she could but tell him that she had just accepted Beau Temple, and even as she talked with him, her father came suddenly upon them in the garden, and, in a sudden mania of rage at the presence of his enemy's son, revealed to both, for the first time, that many years before, when Vittoria was but six months old, her beautiful mother had left her strange, stern husband's home for ever and gone away with the father of Richard Blake. The extenuating circumstances were such as to inspire pity as well as grief in Vittoria's heart, but knowledge fixed a gulf between her and Blake. Yet while Temple, now realising that she cared for Blake, debated with himself and Mrs. Faring whether to release her or hold her to her promise in sheer protecting love, Blake came back into their lives, and the two men met by chance.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

AND PROVES GOOD METAL—OLD FRIENDS  
QUARREL.

TO Miss Vittoria Fleming, emerging from the house after lunch with a half-dozen magazines under one arm and a box of chocolates under the other—Mr. Hennessy with a chop-bone at her feet—appeared Beaumont Temple riding up the hill. He drew rein when he was near, and sat regarding her with at least a semblance of mirth. It may well be that far other emotions warred within him. He said—

"This has all the look of a projected debauch. I come malapropos."

"On the contrary," said she, "you come just in the nick of time, delightful person. Send your horse round—ah, here is Jeremiah to take him!—and come down into the garden with me. You shall have half the chocolates—all but the cocoanut ones; only sheer physical brutality shall wrest those from me."

Temple dismounted, seeming to move with less than his usual lightness—a little stiffly, as became his middle age. He said—

"This is not revelry you offer. You ask me to connive at manslaughter. Half that box of horrors devoured, I should never again rise from my bed."

They went down through the gardens,

Mr. Hennessy with his chop-bone at their heels, past the pool of the goldfishes, and so at last into Vittoria's brick-walled sanctuary. There the girl laid down her burdens upon a bench and turned about. She held Beau Temple by the arms with her two hands and lifted her face to him, while the scandalised Mr. Hennessy averted his gaze.

The man became suddenly grave, with an odd and joyless gravity, standing still in her grasp. He asked—

"Do you love me, my dear?" And she gave a little, sweet, rippling laugh, and nodded her head like a child.

For an instant his face was bitter, then a sudden dark flush swept it. He put out his arms and caught her up in them, crushed her against him with an almost brutal violence. The girl's face was close to his, nearly touching it. She saw his eyes blaze with something she had never before seen in them, felt his swift and uneven breathing. Terror woke in her—a very frenzy of terror and repulsion. She cried out and began to struggle, pushing against his face with her two hands, writhing in his hold. She said—

"No! no! no! let me go! You frighten me. I'm frightened! Please, Beau!" Mr. Hennessy began to bark loudly.

Temple loosed his hold and set the girl gently away from him, using care lest, in her panic of haste, she stumble and fall. The flush was gone from his face, and he covered it with his hands, standing bowed.

But after a long moment so, he felt her hands once more upon his arm, and looked up. The girl held him, leant towards him, her lips quivering, tears in her eyes. She said—

"Ah, Beau, I'm sorry! Forgive me, dear Beau. I—you frightened me a little. That was all. Startled me. I didn't expect—please forgive me! I know. I'm not a fool. Only we've never before been very—lover-like, have we? Not in—that way, I mean. That's why I was startled. Will you forgive me for struggling against you, Beau?"

He took her hands smiling, but she saw that his face was pale and oddly drawn.

"It is for me to ask your forgiveness, child. I wanted—there was something I wanted to know—had to find out. I went about it brutally. Forgive me, but I had to know."

He slipped his arm about her shoulders, holding her very loosely before him.

"The truth is," said he—"the truth is, my dear, we've been making a mistake. I've

been afraid of it for a long time—at last quite sure. This—a moment ago—this was nothing, a sort of little test, to make certainty more certain. We both know, I think."

She could not answer him for a while—stood with her head bowed against his shoulder, her face hidden.

What the man said was so true! She knew at last. That single close instant had made the truth plain to her. The utter panic-stricken terror of dreadful unknown things was cold at her heart still. The passion which should have leapt to meet his passion was not in her—not for him. In its stead that virginal pride, the warder of the sanctuary, shrank back, cried aloud as against threatened outrage. She knew now, at last, that she could never marry him.

She cried his name in a kind of sob, her face hidden against the man's shoulder. And he said, soothing her—the true and tried Beau Temple of so many years—he said—

"I know. I know, child. And I want you to understand that there is no blame in all this, save upon me. The blame is mine altogether. I was old enough, and should have been wise enough to know that the thing was impossible from the beginning. Well, thank Heaven, we've found it out in time!"

"Oh, Beau," she cried, "is it impossible? Must we give it up?" She knew. She was still sick at heart with the knowledge, but she was full of sorrow for him in his bitter hour. Her knees were trembling a little, and she turned away and sat down upon the wooden bench, covering her face. Her movement dislodged the heap of magazines, and they slid to the ground and lay about her feet; but the little box of chocolate sweets, pink-glazed, gilt-lettered, stood in its place and seemed to grin a smug grin—intolerably preposterous in the face of that sober scene.

Temple began to speak—soften—explain—tell how he had watched her from the beginning of their engagement, suspected that all was not quite well, suspected why, put two and two together. And he even told a little of his talk that morning with Béatrix Faring. He made feeble attempts to cheer her up, to add something like humour where there was precious little of such to be found. He seemed to himself to be talking dreary and endless nonsense, and very likely it was so; but it is doubtful if Vittoria heard any of it at all. She sat for a long time, her face bowed over her

hands, and made no movement of any kind. But at last she looked up very sadly, and interrupted that lamentable flow. She said—

"Beau dear, it is very like you to speak of me only in all this—to say nothing of yourself, but how about you, Beau?"

"Ah," she cried, "have I brought you nothing, after all these years, but grief and bitterness? After all you've done for me, always, shall I give you back nothing but a broken heart?"

"No!" he exclaimed strongly. "No, child! I won't have you think that. You give me now, and always will give me, I think, the most I ought ever to have expected or wished. I had a period of madness, and dreamed a sort of mad dream. Let's try to forget it. It could never have been anything but a dream. Let's go back to the old, sweet, comfortable footing once more, and, please Heaven, stay there for the rest of our lives. It's where we belong."

"Can you do that, Beau?" she demanded, watching his face. "Can you go back?" And he said—

"I promise you. Try me and see!" He pulled out his watch and consulted it.

"I must be off. I want to talk to Pender. Perhaps I shall see you again afterwards." He turned away, but Vittoria rose and went to him, held him with her arms, and laid her beautiful face upon his shoulder. She seemed to find no words to say. She was extraordinarily tongue-tied—a strange paralysis upon her—shaken still, within and without, by that illuminating moment—aghast at her new knowledge. She seemed to herself to have been moving in some strange, very feverish dream, wherein the one dear being whom she had always loved and leant upon became suddenly transformed into a terrible stranger, with fierce flaming eyes and brutal arms. She was sick to her very soul. The man patted her head awkwardly, and after a moment turned away again. At a little distance, he said over his shoulder—

"Oh, I saw Richard Blake! He's back at Cedar Hill for a day or two on some business of Faring's. I—talked to him. So he knows."

Vittoria cried out sharply, and called after the man, but he shook his head and went on up the garden path towards the house.

\* \* \* \* \*

He found Pender Fleming where that recluse was always to be found, in his big, dim, book-lined room, sitting quite idle over

a heavy folio which was spread out upon his knees. Pender looked up with that strange contortion of the face which he meant for a smile. He said—

"Ah, Beau! Come in! Come in! I'm glad to see you. My eyes are tired to-day. I can't do much. I'm glad you came."

"You won't be, presently," said Beaumont Temple, standing square and sturdy before the other's chair.

"I've come armed," he said. "We've got to do battle here to-day, you and I." And Pender Fleming peered up, with his short-sighted eyes, vaguely alarmed, dimly apprehensive.

Temple had rehearsed several diplomatic openings for what he wished to say, but had thrown them aside one after the other. Diplomacy was of little use with Pender. Combat with him must be hand-to-hand—no quarter asked or given. Temple took a breath and struck.

"I've just come from Vittoria," he said. "I've been giving her back her freedom. I dare say you have a right to know it—and to know why."

"Yes," said Pender Fleming, "I think I have that right." He would seem to have had himself extraordinarily well in hand, for he made no show of the astonishment he must have felt—dropped at once, expertly as it were, into a hard, quiet tone, which the other man knew only too well and frowned at. Pender was at his worst when he spoke in that tone—his coldest, bitterest. He was well-nigh unapproachable.

"To what," said he, "does my daughter owe the honour of being jilted by you, if I may presume so far as to ask?"

The other man scowled, but kept his temper. He said—

"Well, for one thing—we may as well say the only thing, I suppose, for it's quite enough—she doesn't love me—not in the right way, at least."

Vittoria's father waved his hand.

"Is that," he said, "so important, then—the especial kind and degree of a girl's love?"

"Yes, Pender, it is," said Beaumont Temple. "Strange as it may seem to you, it is. It's so important that we cannot go on without it. Look here!" He came a step nearer, so that he stood almost over his host, a square and earnest figure, frowning, his hands stuck into his pockets. The two made a curious contrast, the strong and virile man of middle age, brown from the sun and wind, broad-shouldered and



sturdy, and that gross, shapeless figure in the arm-chair—the vast and still and pallid face in which only the eyes seemed to live and move, gleaming dully from under their grey brows.

"Look here!" said Beaumont Temple. "We've known each other for a long time, Pender. We can speak frankly to each other—tell the truth. Don't put on airs with me. I'm not impressed by them. Don't take refuge in sarcasm. I laugh at it. Face me honestly, and deal with me as I deal with you. I confess that I've made a bad mistake. I was a fool. I thought that child, who had been a sort of little sister to me for twenty years, could be made over into a lover and a wife by the miracle of a few words. I was a fool. Such things don't happen—not once in ten thousand times. I told her how I'd come to feel—this spasm of second youth I found myself in—begged her to try to think of me in a new way, and she tried. As a matter of fact, I found her, just then, at a certain psychological crisis, though I didn't know till long after—one of those womanish states of mind we men will never comprehend—and that helped me on, threw her, as one might say, into my arms.

"Of course, it turned out to be quite posterous. She hadn't altered her attitude towards me by a hair's breadth. It would have been the most dastardly of crimes to have let her go on with it. Besides—well, I found out where we stood, and stopped it to-day. No! Vittoria did not ask to be released. I did it myself. She's glad it's over. I know that. And so, in a fashion, am I. It would have come to shipwreck sooner or later. Better find out where the harm is before the voyage begins."

Pender Fleming's eyes gleamed alertly in his white and mask-like face. The rest of his great body might have been dead.

"You have not yet come to the point," said he. "There's something behind all this. What is it?" The younger man drew a sigh.

"Have it, then!" he said.

"Pender, we poor mortals can't fight against Fate. If we do, we get most hideously smashed. I do not wish to cause you unnecessary pain, but I must ask you to look back twenty years for evidence of that. If Vittoria and I should marry, it is all too possible that that old tragedy would be re-enacted, and I won't expose the child to such a danger. She loves Richard Blake, Pender, and Richard Blake loves her!"

That roused the man at last. He gave a

sort of wailing cry, and his hands shook and rattled upon the wooden chair arms. His still face began to twist and writhe as Vittoria had once seen it do. But abruptly the strange, silent spasm broke into terrible laughter, low and very mirthless.

"You—you mean to give her up to—give her up to—him?" he asked. It seemed to be impossible to say Richard Blake's name. And the younger man said—

"Yes, Pender. She loves him, and I believe him to be worthy. I talked with him to—once. I liked him. He is a brave and unselfish young man. In talking with him I discovered, quite by chance, that he is the man some friends of mine—and his—told me about last year. I dare say they told me that his name was Blake, but it would have meant nothing to me at that time. There are hundreds of Blakes. I won't go into the story, but I will say that I would give all I have ever achieved, or ever shall achieve, if men could honestly tell about me what these men told me about young Richard Blake. He's tried gold, Pender. The child can make no mistake in marrying him. I withdraw from the field. They love each other, and who am I to stand in love's way?"

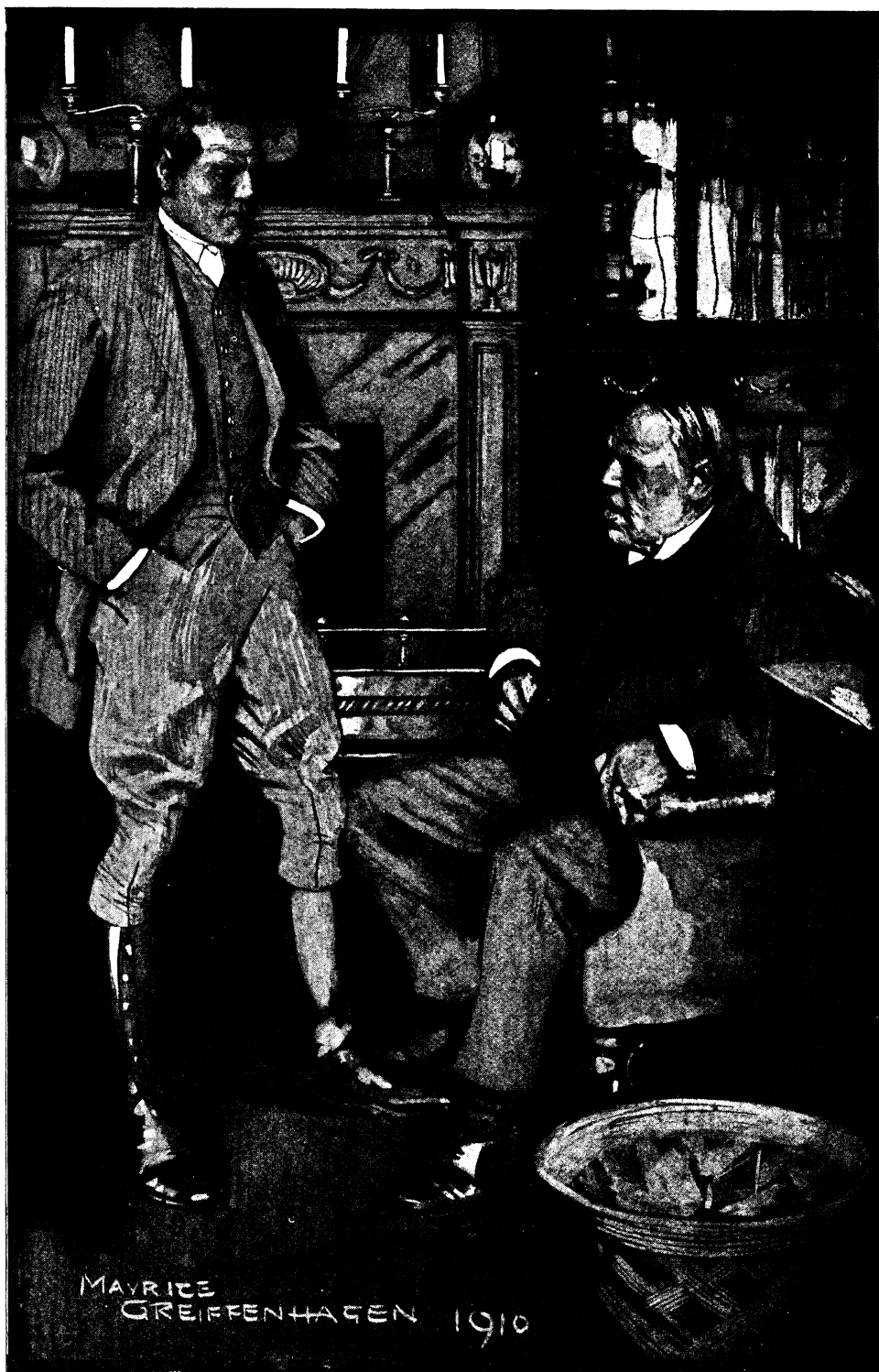
"You don't happen to know," said Vittoria's father—"you don't happen to know of a trifling promise she made me."

"Oh, yes," said Beau Temple, "I know of it. You must give her back her promise, Pender. I have stepped out of her way to give her her chance of happiness. You must complete the gift. It's all we two oldsters live for, I take it, eh? To see that child happy. Her happiness is ours. Well, now's the time, my friend. Give her back her promise and your blessing with it."

He paused there as if for a reply, but the other man was still. Not even a muscle of those pendulous jowls or that out-thrust lower lip twitched; only the eyes seemed to be alive. They looked out from the shadows watchful and alert, and—gleaming so, out of that vast immobility—there was something baleful about them, Temple thought, something uncanny and serpent-like.

He frowned, and took a short turn across the room and back.

"Of course, I understand," said he, "that it hurts you to give your daughter to Creighton Blake's son. I understand that. And yet, after all, why? This young man certainly cannot be blamed for his father's sins. He will have been, twenty years ago, a little lad in school. He had nothing to do with the affair. Also, you must remember



“‘To what,’ said he, ‘does my daughter owe the honour of being jilted by you?’”

that, while his father took away, he has restored. He saved your child's life. That evens matters, eh?" Temple came to an impatient stop before his host.

"Come, Pender!" said he. "Don't sit there like a make-believe Oriental image. Man, speak up! Say you'll let the child off her promise! You'll have to do it in the end, you know. Make a virtue of the necessity and do it handsomely now. You'll be well repaid in love and gratitude—and that's good coin. Speak up!"

"Never so long as I live, nor after!" said Pender Fleming in a low voice. "She has given me her solemn promise. Ah, my prophetic soul! I felt it would come to this. I felt it—and she shall keep that promise not only so long as I live, but so long as she lives after me." He licked his dry lips.

But Beau Temple gave an exclamation of mingled anger and disgust.

"Oh, rubbish!" said he. "Pender, you're behaving like a fool! I'm ashamed of you! You're behaving like a stubborn child, who wants to beat everybody in sight because it has been hurt. Come! Be as human as you can. You love the girl, in your fashion, I take it? Well, you've never yet given any very good proof of that. Give it now."

"Never in this world!" said Pender Fleming. "Never under any conceivable circumstances!"

"Be careful, Pender!" cried the younger man. "Think what you say! Remember what happened long ago. You're in a fair way to make it happen again, you know."

"I have her solemn promise!"

"Aye," said Beau Temple—"aye, that you have. And if you play Shylock with her, she'll keep it as long as she can. Promises, friend, are of the conscious will. So long as that holds, they are held, and hearts may break to keep them. But how about afterwards? Hearts break and then the strength goes—the strength to resist." He was so very much in earnest that he did not realise how he was quoting word upon word from Béatrix Faring. "Little by little it goes—trickling away—and then comes a sort of blind madness—a fury of despair—and then the end. Who of us knows the end of his strength to resist? Another woman, Pender, as pure and good and sweet a woman as ever breathed God's air, made a promise once—to love, honour, and obey. But there came something so far beyond her imagination—so far beyond her strength to resist—that she was like a wind-blown straw

—a little boat in a storm. What could her easy promises do for her then?"

Pender Fleming suddenly hid his face, and strange, little, shivering, moaning voices came from behind the strained fingers.

"Let me be!" he cried. "Let me be, for Heaven's sake!"

"I think," said Beau Temple quaintly, "that it is for Heaven's sake I dare not let you be—for Heaven's and Vittoria's. Yes, and for yours as well. . . . Do you love the child?"

The elder man dropped his hands from his contorted face, and Beau Temple averted his eyes. It seemed to him a sort of spiritual nakedness he looked upon—something indecent, obscene.

"Yes, yes!" he said, with a sort of hurried awkwardness. "To be sure. Of course you love her. Well, prove it! Now's the time."

"What you ask of me is impossible—impossible!" said Pender Fleming. He spoke in a choked whisper, breathing hard. But again the younger man cried out upon him in anger.

"This is incredible! It is inhuman! Man, you don't know what you're saying. You rave." Abruptly he bent forward to look close into the other's white face, and so stared upon him while one might have counted ten. In the end he recoiled, tight lipped. He said—

"This is beyond my uttermost conception of human villainess—a man so poisoned in soul that he will wreck his only child's life to pay a debt of hatred! It is beyond belief."

And after a silent space he said—

"Vengeance is Heaven's, Pender, not yours."

He came forward a step towards the great writing-table and the man who sat, still as death, behind it. And, when he spoke, his voice was very grave.

"We two," said he, "have known each other for a good many years. I have come here to sit with you and to walk and talk with you as no other human soul has done through two decades. You have seemed glad of my friendship. It has been your one remaining link with the outside world. But I warn you, Pender, that unless you give over this hideous and brutal madness of yours—give it over this day and hour—set that innocent child free of her rash promise—I warn you that unless you do this, I will go from out your house, and, as Heaven is above us, I will never again set foot in it while you live!"

As little rippling shadows shiver across

still water before a squall of wind, so shadows, or something like them, fled across Pender Fleming's still face and, it may be, left it a little greyer—the lines a little deeper and more haggard. But he did not speak. Even then he did not speak.

"Stand up!" cried Beaumont Temple in a great voice. He began to tremble with wrath—the righteous wrath of a good man moved beyond bearing.

"Stand up and speak like a man," said he, "if there is any manliness left in you!" He pointed a rigid and accusing finger.

"I say, if there is any manliness left in you, but I almost believe there is none. You have posed and shammed and pretended here for twenty years—a mock monument of deathless grief—the caricature of a sorrowful man! I have watched you, Pender, from first to last, and I have seen you strutting before your mental mirror, preening your black feathers, schooling your face into a mask of melancholy, delighting in the perfection with which you played your miserable rôle. A great blow smote you twenty years ago—a blow to stagger any man—but not to crush him for life, not to make him forget that he had still a life to live, and other lives that hung upon his. Another man, a real man, would have bowed his head to the storm, and when the bitterest of his grief was over, when time had covered his wounds a little, would have raised it again and looked his responsibilities in the face, set his shoulder again to the good and wholesome tasks Heaven had allotted him. . . . What have you done? You have filled your paltry soul with one contemptible thought—hatred. You have set in the midst of your mental horizon one contemptible object—vengeance.

"How have you behaved to that child, that blameless child, who was left in your hands—the most solemn and exacting responsibility that can be laid upon a human soul? What have you done for her? Nothing, I say! Absolutely nothing! Not only have you never stirred your hand in her cause, but you have immured her here, buried her, to satisfy your incredibly gigantic selfishness. I am ashamed to think that I have taken your hand—eaten your bread. I am humiliated in my own eyes!"

He went a little way towards the door of the room, but halted there, looking back. Pender Fleming's gross body was shaken grotesquely by silent weeping—a dreadful sight—and tears ran down his white face and dripped from the pendent jowls. He wept openly and unashamed, made no effort

even to wipe his eyes. But when the other man turned with that abrupt movement and went towards the door, he gave a sudden hoarse cry, and stretched out his hands. He seemed unable to rise. He called upon Beau Temple by name, desperately, but the voice went little beyond a whisper. He said—

"Wait! wait! For Heaven's sake, Beau, don't turn away from me now. I can't—I have no one. No one! You don't understand. All these years—haunted. I've been haunted, devil-ridden. I can't—all in a moment. Give me time! I must think. You don't know how incredibly bitter——"

"His son!" the man cried. The words wrenched themselves out of a sheer physical agony. "Creighton Blake's son! I can't, Beau. Don't you see I can't? First Bianca—then the child! It would kill me!" He seemed to see a further movement of the man across the room, for he gave another cry and struggled half out of his chair.

"Give me time! A little time! Don't turn away from me, Beau. Don't desert me. I love the child. She's all I have. I'll—try. I'll try. Only give me time to think."

Temple watched him coldly. He was still very angry and he had small pity upon the man, but he had the sense to see that Pender was on the verge of collapse—that no more could be got out of him for the time being.

"When you are ready to give Vittoria back her promise," said he, "you can send for me and I will come. Until that time I shall not again set foot in your house." He seemed to be about to say more, but after a moment shook his head and turned away. So the door closed, and Pender Fleming was left alone—his only friend gone from him in anger.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### LE PHILOSOPHE.

TEMPLE saw Vittoria for no more than a few brief moments when he came out from that stormy interview with her father. He had not meant to see her at all. He had meant to slip away unnoticed, but as he was mounting his horse under the *porte-cochère* at the side of the house, she came up from the gardens and saw him. So he sent away the stable boy and waited.

Vittoria hastened to where he was and stood by the horse, laying a hand on the bridle. She looked up at Temple and saw that his face was flushed and stern, with

glittering eyes. The man was still thoroughly angry, with a depth of anger which seldom entered his quiet life, and so, when it came, was slow to depart.

"What has happened, Beau?" she asked, gazing up at him anxiously. "I've never before seen you look like that. What is it?" He gave her a wry smile.

"Oh, I've been having it out with Pender. We spoke some rather frank words—at least, I did."

"Having it out with him?" She wondered. And Temple said—

"About you and Richard Blake and—your promise. Pender's a Shylock. It was hard for me to keep my hands off him."

She said "Oh!" in a very low voice, and bent her head so that her face was hidden from the man who sat above her. After a moment she shook her head.

"There's no one like you, Beau!" said she. "No one in this world—no one! But it's no good, you know. I promised faithfully. And even if—well, if I should ever be sorry I did it—want my promise back—he'd never give it me. Did you think he would? Oh, you don't know him. He'd die first. He'd—rather see me dead than—than *that*. He told me so once, and he meant it.

"Ah, Beau," she cried, looking up to him again—and there were tears upon her beautiful face—"to think of you doing this for me? Is there no selfishness in you at all, Beau? Are you all unselfish—always?"

The man gave a brief awkward laugh.

"You ought to know that I'm not. Hasn't all this wretched business—or all the latter part of it—come from my blind selfishness? Of course it has. If I hadn't begged you to be so insane as to marry me, you'd have been free when Blake came here. You'd never have made that idiotic promise. You'd—oh, I've been altogether at fault—a bungling, meddlesome ass! See what has come of it! D'you wonder I want to do what I can to patch it up? Don't talk rubbish about unselfishness. It's remorse.

"Well, Pender and I have had a most ruffianly time in yonder, and I lost my temper and slanged him like a bargee, and Heaven knows what it will end in! I think I frightened him a bit, anyhow—and that's wholesome. I told him I'd never set foot in his house again until he gave you back your promise."

"Beau! Beau!" cried the girl. "You didn't! You never told him that!"

"Yes, I did, too!" said the man, with some

retrospective relish. "And I meant it. If Pender has become the sort of man who will do so inhumanly wicked a thing as to hold you to that promise out of sheer hatred and revenge—if he's that sort of a man, I don't care to have anything more to do with him. I'm done with him for ever."

Vittoria began to cry. But then she could cry and be beautiful still—and few women can achieve that.

"Then I'm to lose you altogether, Beau? I'm to see no more of you? I think I wish I were dead!"

"Good Heavens, child!" he exclaimed. "Heavens, no! What an idea! Nothing of the sort. Of course we're to go on as before. You'll take notice that I said I'd never again set foot in Pender's house. I said nothing about his garden, and I said nothing about your setting your feet in my house. I should think not!" His face turned grave.

"I can't tell how this thing will turn out. I frightened him. I stirred him a little. That I'm sure of. But who knows Pender Fleming? Not I. I think the man is almost insane—a monomaniac—obsessed by everlasting hatred and thirst for vengeance. He has lost all sense of proportion. His grief and his resentment and his hatred loom so large before him, through coddling them all these years, that everything else looks small and unimportant—even you—even your happiness. We must use every effort we can to break him down now; but if he sticks it out, we must find some way of getting you free of his clutches later on. You're of age and you have your mother's little fortune. There's no reason why you should continue to be immured with a madman. There are the Farings, there's your cousin, Catharine Dudley—plenty more. You can at least live a human life, and let Pender growl to himself in his cave. As for the promise—well, I'm not so sure that promises extorted in excitement and in ignorance of all the facts need be binding. When you made that one, you didn't know what you know now. You thought the right in that old matter was all on your father's side. I don't think a promise made under such conditions is worth much. Eh?"

Vittoria shook her head.

"A promise is a promise, Beau. I gave my word very solemnly. I shall never break it. It's infinitely good and sweet of you to try to make it easy for me—help my conscience out—but—no, I couldn't break a solemn promise made to my own father. If

I didn't know all the circumstances, at least I knew perfectly well what I was promising. I'll never break it."

"No," said Beau Temple, with a little sigh. He looked down at her, shaking his head, and smiled.

"I suppose you won't," said he. "There's a bit of Pender in you, after all—stern stuff. Italian sunshine and Aberdeen granite make an odd combination, don't they? They must have a terrible time together. Thank Heaven, the granite's deep down out of sight, anyhow!" He gathered up the reins.

"I must be getting back to my hill. For a quiet and peace-loving old soul, I seem to have had rather a warlike day." He held down one hand, and the girl took it in both hers and laid her cheek against it.

"Don't you go mourning and blubbing, now!" said he. "We shall find a way out of all this, somehow. I pledge my word." He leant abruptly from his saddle and kissed her on the nearest available point, which chanced to be a very small pink ear. Then he clucked to the patient beast and rode away. And the girl threw kisses after him.

\* \* \* \* \*

Down beyond the gates of Standish, with his face turned homewards, he pulled up to a walk and rode slowly between the green hedgerows, drooping a little in the saddle, his hands clasped before him, his head bent. He became aware that he was prodigiously tired—weary to the point of exhaustion. It was the truth that he had spoken to Vittoria. For so quiet and peace-loving a soul, the day had been a very warlike one to him, had told upon him heavily. He was not used to such days.

Oddly, however, and perhaps, fortunately, the sequence of the day's events had spared him somewhat, for the flame and ensuing heat of his anger towards Pender Fleming masked, for the time, that sense of loss irreparable which later on he would have to envisage and accustom himself to. He was aware of that, also, as he rode slowly homeward with the warmth of the sun upon him—nodded his head over it, was glad of it. It was something gained, since the first hours of grief or loss are bitterest. In some fashion battle must be renewed with the master of Standish; somehow Pender must be overthrown, the girl set free to follow where her heart led. There lay interest and occupation for some time to come, with little opportunity for repining. He saw himself, with a brief grin, for something like a general after a

defeat—recasting his losses, reviewing what was left to him, looking already to the future and what might be in store. And once, after a space of this, the man smote his hands together, to the nervous undoing of the grey nag, and said aloud very earnestly—

"She shall have her life! By Heaven, she shall have her life—Pender or no Pender!" By which it is made plain that Temple's own woes were seldom first with him.

Arrived at Lone Tree Hill, he dismounted and entered the screened porch at the side of the house. The blind man De Coucy was there with a blind man's book of raised print upon his knees. He looked up with a smile, exclaiming—

"*C'est toi, mon vieux?*" Temple said—

"*Oui*," and let himself heavily down into a chair that creaked protest under him. He drew a sigh and took his head into his hands. His voice sounded flat and dry.

"*Dieu, comme je suis fatigué! Au bout de mes forces!*"

The Frenchman did not answer, but seemed to wait, and after a pause Temple said—

"I have, in this one day, cemented a friendship, given up a hope which I have cherished very dearly for a long time, and quarrelled, perhaps beyond repair, with a comrade. It has been an eventful day for me."

"*Mon très cher ami*," said M. de Coucy, "let us hope that the friendship gained may more than compensate for that lost, and that the hope abandoned, *pour le bon motif*, may bestow blessings that will make you glad to the end of your days!"

The other man looked up at him with a pallid curiosity, wondering how much he knew, and after a moment the Frenchman went on—

"I have asked no questions and I ask none now. You have told me little, but I know that you have been sad. I know that another also has been sad. We of the darkened world have much leisure—reflect, put two with two, and make four. I think you will be glad of this sacrifice. One of the pleasantest things I know of in this world is the fact that sacrifice brings, in almost every instance, its own reward, for the keenness of desire must, of necessity, dull with time—become no more than a memory—but the good done by the sacrifice remains."

"If it is truly a good," said Beau Temple. "One might make mistakes."

"Are you in doubt?"

"No! No, I cannot doubt. It was the



only thing to do. . . . But I shall be lonely, Raoul. I shall be very lonely."

"You have your work," said the Frenchman. "What would have become of that in—the other event? I have thought about that and wondered and grieved. You are an artist. You have obligations—serious ones. I think one has hardly the right to shirk them. It is old and trite—*tout ce qu'il y a du plus banal*—the doctrine that the good artist must make mistress and wife, children, family, friends, of his art, but I am afraid it is true. To create, one must suffer. The well-fed canary does not sing, nor the fat hound hunt. That is a *reductio ad absurdum*, but it also is true, like most trite sayings. And, besides——"

"Well?"

"You have certain memories, *mon vieux*, to go through life with."

Beau Temple drew a sharp breath.

"Yes," said he in a whisper—"ah, yes! . . . They will carry me through this life, I think."

## CHAPTER XX.

### NIGHT IN THE WALLED GARDEN—LOVE SPREADS HIS SAILS.

VITTORIA passed the remainder of that afternoon in her walled garden alone with Mr. Hennessy. She did not read the magazines that she had brought out for the purpose, nor devour the little box of Russian chocolates, but sat quite still on one of the benches, her hands clasped in her lap, her eyes fixed, not as eyes that see, upon the opposite wall. From time to time Mr. Hennessy made timid overtures to her, a hesitant paw, a cold damp nose upstretched towards the still hands, but his mistress paid him no attention whatever, and, after a long while, he curled up at her feet, as philosophically as is possible for an Irishman, and dreamed that he was chasing all the cats in the world, and that, despite their overwhelming numbers, they fled from him in utter consternation, and he caught them one by one and slew them amidst sanguinary rivers—a very Waterloo of cats. He quivered with joy as he slept, and once or twice emitted low barks of proud defiance, and his legs twitched as he thought he ran, but Vittoria neither saw nor heard. Her eyes and her mind were far away.

She wished very much that she might see Béatrix Faring, and she would have proposed herself for dinner at Cedar Hill, but Richard

Blake was there, and it could not be done. So at last, when the sun was low and it was near dinner-time, she rose, a little stiff from long sitting in one position, and went up to the house to dress.

She expected to dine alone, because she was quite sure that her father, after that violent scene with Beau Temple, would remain in his own part of the house, but, very much to her surprise, he appeared at the table. He looked wretchedly ill, even whiter than usual, and, if it can be said of a man so gross in figure, haggard and thin. There were hollows beside his temples, and the skin of his face seemed to hang loosely upon the bones, so that there were new vertical folds and creases. It was rather horrible. Vittoria exclaimed over his altered appearance, and, woman-like, wanted to dose him with something; but the man checked her with his usual impatience, insisting that he was as well as he had ever been, and she dared say no more.

They had a curious hour together. Pender Fleming seemed to have come out of his retreat for a definite purpose. It was as if he were attempting, at the expense of great labour, to ingratiate himself with his daughter—make himself agreeable to her—speak her language. He talked of her season in London, hinted at a repetition of the visit in the following year, asked questions as to the changes in town since his last visit, years gone by. He spoke warmly of Catharine Dudley and of the Farings, and inquired about Aunt Arabella Crowley, whom he had once known, but said never a word of Beau Temple nor of Richard Blake, nor of anything which could reasonably bring up their names.

It was a remarkable effort, far the most elaborate that Pender had ever made, and Vittoria received it with as good a grace as she could muster, though she was astonished and puzzled almost beyond speech. She could not at all imagine what reason the man had for this new trend—what purpose he had in view, since, of course, there must be a purpose of some kind. And once or twice she made a feeble opening for explanations, if he chose to offer any, but her father either saw no openings or, seeing, refused to be led into them. He remained, as ever, enigmatic—a problem beyond solving, and, as it were, she gave him up. She was a little touched by his effort, but she was more than a little suspicious of it. It came too late, by several years, to bear with it any conviction of honesty.

After dinner, when, to her relief, she was left alone, she played for a while at the piano—Chopin and some little German songs, and the Grieg “Peer Gynt” music, after that began to read M. Anatole France’s “L’Île des Pingvins,” which had come in the post the day before, and about eleven o’clock went upstairs. She was not in the least sleepy, but mechanically got through the usual preparations for the night, and went to bed because there seemed to be nothing else to do.

Once there, she lay wide-eyed, fronting the dark, and sleep would have none of her. Her mind was a battle-ground whereupon a vast relief and a sort of shamed and secret joy fought with deep depression. For the hour depression seemed to have the better of it—weighed darkly, heavily, upon her. Her father’s strange bearing had filled her with vague dread, but there was more than that. There was Beau Temple.

She gave a little sob in the dark. It was very bitter to her to have failed Beau after all those years of care and tenderness and affection. It hurt her sorely. And it was bitter also to think how she had let him go, almost without a word. Looking back upon the afternoon, it seemed to her that she had hardly spoken at all after that moment of shock and terror, in which the Beau she had known and loved so well had all at once become a stranger to her. She had been too stunned for words—excuses—apologies. She had let him go, and the man, faithful even through his dark hour, had gone to plead for her—fight her battles—win for her a happiness he could never share. Her heart bled for him. She sorrowed for his sorrow, but she knew that there could be no going back. The thing which had come between them, thrusting them apart, stood there yet, and she shivered a little to think of it. Beau could never again be quite the same to her. She could never quite forget.

Rather oddly, her mind went back to that time—only a few days before, but it seemed months to her—when she had spent a week deliberating over his proposal and looking forward to a probable marriage with him. She almost laughed, but not for mirth, as she remembered with what dispassionate calm she had contemplated the change in their relations, how she had felt sure that, from much reading of books and a little reflection over them, she was prepared for all that might be in store. The change from fatherly or brotherly friend to lover had seemed to her then a very simple thing—tenderness

grown more tender, perhaps—intimacy more intimate, but unaltered in kind.

Then the terrible moment and the fear and the repulsion!

She began to tremble a little with fear of love. If love came bearing that dreadful face, could she ever meet him with gladness—open arms? Must there not always rise in her the panic of terror, the instinct to struggle and escape?

She tried to imagine that love had come in the person, not of Beau Temple, but of another. And she remembered that he had come once, and her heart began to beat very fast indeed, and she felt that her face was flushing hot in the darkness.

If love should come again!

She gave a little cry and suddenly clasped her hands together over her eyes, as if to shut out the sight of something. And after a while she said aloud—

“Never! Never! Never!” For she knew in whose person love must come to her, if he ever came, and she had sworn that love very solemnly. She had given her solemn promise, and she would never break that. Beau Temple had been right. There was a bit of Pender in her—Aberdeen granite that the sun of Italy might warm, but could not melt.

Vittoria lay still in her bed for a while longer, her eyes very wide open, seeing no one may say what, but at last sat up, found her fleece-lined *mules* by groping for them at the bedside, and so rose to her feet. At first she thought she would make a light, but gave that over and began to move about the room in the darkness, which was not gloomy, for the windows were open, so that she could see the vague shapes of the chairs and tables round her. She stood for an instant with her hands upon the marble mantel and looked up to where her beautiful mother sat hidden in the night—hidden but as sleepless as Vittoria herself—leaning forward, with one lovely arm laid along the back of the seat, the other across her knees, her eyes straining through the darkness to meet her daughter’s eyes, her lips parted in speech. Vittoria knew what the speech was. She heard it as if it had been a real and physical voice: “When love calls, answer and go!”

The girl shook her head a little sadly, but without bitterness.

“If only I might, my dearest dear!” said she. “But I cannot go.”

She turned away across the room to one of the open windows. The cool breath of

the night came in there, and it was sweet and grateful to her. She fetched a cushion and set it upon the floor of the tiny balcony without the window. And she knelt down and laid her arms upon the low balcony rail before her, and lifted her hot face to the night's fresh kiss.

There was a waning moon to the west, but now and then a cloud drifted slowly across its face, and the silver light fled from the fields and trees beneath. There were stars in millions, cold and blue, and, lower, among the tree-tops very far away, a few yellow pin-points of light from the village. The barely perceptible breeze came from that direction, and, as the girl knelt upon her balcony, there reached her ears a faint sound of chimes—the very ghost of a sound—and afterwards a single clear bell. One o'clock.

Beneath her the gardens slept dark and still, but that barely perceptible breeze bore up the scent of roses and of all the green growing things. She felt a sudden poignant desire to be down there close to the earth, where everything was cool and fresh and odorous, where the dew lay on the close-clipped turf and the roses hung pallid and strange in the moonlight. She knew that there would be no one to see her, for the household was long since abed and asleep, and even the dogs were in their kennels. She gave a little laugh in the dark, and rose at once and turned back into the room.

She put on a thin dressing-gown, a sort of kimono, and went noiselessly out and down to a certain door at the side of the house, which she knew was merely bolted at night, not locked with a key. Then, in a moment more, she was in the open, across the drive which encircled the house, and moving down the gravel path through the gardens. She came to the walled-enclosure which was her very own and which she loved, and her roses leant to her out of the gloom at either side. The fountain gurgled and dripped in the midst of the place, and the stars swam reflected in the oblong pool. At either side two broad beech trees threw a circle of inky darkness, and their leaves stirred over it, grey in the moonlight. A little drowsy bird cheeped once from somewhere out of sight, and another answered it more drowsily still and rustled the leaves where it was.

Vittoria put off the bedroom shoes and stood with her naked feet upon the wet turf. A tingling thrill of coolness and life ran up through her from feet to head, and it seemed to work a sort of magic upon her.

It seemed to her that she became a part of that sweet and fragrant garden and of the moonlit night—an enchanted being in a world of make-belief. It seemed to her that a horn should wind far away in the wood, and that her fairy prince lover should ride towards her in the moonlight, and leap from his horse and come and kneel at her feet. She looked back towards the iron gate in the wall, and remembered how Richard Blake had come in through it and gone out by it once more. She wondered if the little gate would ever again swing open to his hand, and her heart gave a sudden, strange, fierce throb of longing, and tears stung in her eyes.

At first she thought that the tears and the moonlight and her foolish fancies had conspired together to deceive her, and she began a nervous laugh and shook her head; but in the end she caught her two hands up over her mouth to check the scream which rose there, and stood motionless, staring, while the gate in the wall stirred as she had tried to imagine, and opened noiselessly and closed again behind someone who had entered.

The man turned, his face in the moonlight, and, when he looked before him, raised one arm over his eyes. But after a moment he came forward very slowly, step by step, and Vittoria heard the breath hiss between his teeth and knew that he thought her a phantom. He put out one hand with an odd, stiff gesture, and touched her arm, but at that human touch he fell back again with a sound that was like a sob, and for a moment covered his face, shaking all over. When at last he could speak, he said, whispering—

"I meant—you not to know. I meant just to come and—sit for a little while in your garden. I wanted to see the house where you were sleeping. Only that. I didn't mean you to know. I swear I didn't mean you to know! I should have gone away presently."

She said—

"Yes, I know. I believe you. It's not your fault." She found that her breath was coming in strange, silent gasps, as if the air had suddenly grown very thin.

"Only," she said, "you must go away, please. You shouldn't have come—or I'll go back into the house."

She turned unsteadily, but the man was before her, his arms outstretched wide. He said—

"No! no! Not yet. A little moment first. Just a little moment! Since by some miracle we are here together, stay with me a moment more. It can do no harm."

Enchantment was all round and about her. She breathed it into her lungs. The moonlight—the soft air—the breath of roses, they were a spell upon her: the sight of the man before her, and the sound of his hushed voice a part of the spell. Almost she became convinced that she was moving in a dream—that nothing mattered. She found herself passive—without the will or the power to move.

"I must go back into the house," she said, but she did not go. She was conscious of an odd sense of great bodily weakness.

"Vittoria," said Richard Blake, "I talked with Beaumont Temple to-day." And she nodded.

"Yes. I know. I did, too. He told me."

"He has set you free."

"Yes," she said, whispering.

"Vittoria," said he, "I love you. I can tell you so now—openly—without shame or dishonour. I love you."

Vittoria gave a little sob. And again she said, whispering—

"I know. I know."

"Oh," she said, "I'm glad! I'm so glad! It is very sweet to me to know that you love me. I wanted you to say it. Please say it again. It will help me so—to go on with. It will make my life so beautiful."

She saw the man's quick frown in the moonlight.

"What do you mean," he demanded, "by my love 'helping you—to go on with'?"

What do you mean by that?"

She uttered a little cry.

"Didn't Beau Temple tell you about the promise I made to my father?"

"Oh, yes!" said Richard Blake. "He told me about that. Do you expect me to take it seriously? Do you think I'm going to lose you for ever because you made an absurd promise when you didn't even know the facts of the case?"

"A promise is a promise," said she soberly. "If you knew me better, you'd know that I couldn't even think of breaking it." He came closer to her, until he was within arm's length, gazed anxiously into her face, that was white and very beautiful in the moonlight.

"Do you love me—even a little, Vittoria?"

"I have never loved anyone else," she said bravely, and did not take her eyes from his. "I never shall. I think I have loved you from the beginning, and I know I shall love you to the end, but I can never marry you. No! Wait! Listen to me! It is

more than just the fact of a promise that comes between us. It's—obedience—duty—good faith. You know how my father feels. And it is not altogether preposterous. They—wronged him deeply, and he has never got over it. He never will. I am all he has in the world. If I should leave him and marry you, I am almost sure that it would kill him. I should have killed my father to gain my own happiness. You cannot conceive how deeply he feels about it all. Beau Temple talked with him—tried to win him over—even quarrelled with him beyond repair, I am afraid. But I know that it came to nothing. My father has lost his best, almost his only, friend rather than give way. He *cannot* give way. He has forgotten how."

The man made a strong effort at self-control, and for the moment achieved it. He put his hands behind him.

"Vittoria," said he, "what do you think it is that has brought us two together—your mother's daughter and my father's son?"

"I suppose it must be Fate," she said—"whatever that is."

"Then Fate," said Richard Blake, "will go on working, and your father will have to give way before it. He cannot fight long against Fate. No one can. Meanwhile—"

"Ah," he cried, "it is unbearable! I will not give you up! I cannot. Do you think I will go on through my life loving you, knowing that you love me back, and let it end there? It's impossible, I tell you. Has not that—that—has not your father had enough sacrificed to him already? Was not your mother's life, until near the end—is not your own life, shut up here away from the world—are not they enough? Is this man a god, that lives upon lives should be sacrificed to him? Vittoria, it's too much. We're young, you and I. The best of our lives is before us. Your father is an old man. He had his chance in life and lost it through his own acts. Don't let him play Moloch to you and to me! He has already had more than he deserves. Don't let a foolish promise—a half-dozen words spoken in excitement—wreck us for ever. It's not fair. It's not just."

Vittoria covered her face.

"Oh, Richard, Richard, don't tempt me! You make it seem so easy, so right, to break my word. But I know it isn't right. We can't do that. They robbed him, my mother and your father. Whatever they suffered, whatever my poor mother had to endure—and I shall never forgive my father for it—still they ruined his life. Glad as I am that

they went away and had their little year of happiness, still, I know that they wrecked him utterly. We're hostages of their sin, Richard. We must suffer for what they did. The sins of the fathers! We suffer for them. Ah, my dear, don't tempt me! Don't make it harder for me than it is. Help me to do what I must do!"

He looked upon her with haggard and with bitter eyes, yet with pride in her very inflexibility. She was stronger than he, and he loved her for it. He drew a great sigh.

"I can't fail you," he said, "when you plead with me. You shame me. I'll say no more. There will come times when living without you will be unbearable, and I shall make insane plans for storming Standish and carrying you off, whether you want to go or not. There will come times like that." He gazed at her reflectively.

"And, you know," said he, "it isn't improbable that one day I shall do it. I'm not a very civilised person. One day it will be plain to me that you and I are leading empty and ruined lives just for a scruple—a word—a point of fantastic honour. Then I shall do something, I warn you. I can endure a good deal on my own account, but I don't know yet how much I can endure on yours. If I should see you very unhappy—very wretched—living on, year after year, as a useless, wicked sacrifice to a madman, I—well, I think I couldn't stand that. We shall see."

The man's brows were drawn into a frown, but it was not an angry frown. There was no passion in him just then. He really seemed to be looking forward with perfect seriousness to that not improbable day of which he spoke, to be wondering calmly about it, and his aspect lent the words an extraordinary air of reasonableness. Despite herself, Vittoria thrilled to them.

"But I put my faith," he went on, "in the Fate that has moved us already so far—wrought miracles in our behalf. Too many extraordinary things have happened to us to be mere chance. That we should ever have met at all was strange enough. All the rest is stranger still."

Vittoria put out her hands to him with a little laugh that was not of mirth, but of tenderness.

"Lovers' talk, my dear," said she—"lovers' talk! Were there ever two people who loved each other and didn't think unprecedented miracles had been worked for them—and for them alone? . . . Well, maybe it's so. Maybe miracles are worked

for lovers. What better thing could they be for? Let's be grateful for our miracles!" Blake would have echoed her laughter, but the effort died in its beginning, and he stood silent, save for one very long, deep breath, looking at her where she stood in the moonlight before him. She must have been astonishingly beautiful in that hour, clad in her thin, straight-hanging garments, with her black hair falling down over her shoulders, and her little naked feet white upon the turf.

The hands she had stretched out to him he took in his, and he went down upon his knees before her and held her hands to his face. He might have been, in very truth, that fairy prince lover who had ridden to her through the night. Vittoria gave a little low cry and moved closer to where he knelt. She bent above him, and the man's face lay against her breast. He both felt and heard her heart beat, and it beat fast and unsteadily.

In every very great love there is the passion to fight for and shield and protect the object of that love, even against one's own self; and this passion rose in the man, and was for the time above all else. Vittoria was alone with him, and she trusted him, and she loved him very dearly, as only the entirely innocent can do, without question or reserve. He would have killed himself rather than prove unworthy of her trust just then.

She raised herself upright, not moving away, and the man laid his arms about her so that she stood before him within their circle. She held his head with her two little hands.

"Why don't you speak to me?" she said at last, in her half whisper.

"Is there anything to say?" he asked. "I can think of nothing except that I love you, so that I am blind and speechless and there's no strength in me. I think no one ever loved anyone so much before."

She stirred in his arms and laughed above him, a little laugh of divine tenderness.

"Lovers' talk, my dearest!" she said again. "Every lover in all the world has said that—and, I hope, meant it. Ah, but I love you to say it to me! Say it again! Say it again!"

"I love you more than anyone ever loved anyone before!" he said, without a spark of humour, a little edge of fierceness in his tone.

"And I don't care," he said, "whether or not other people have said the same words.



"Their first kiss hung between them."



"They're true for us only. The other people didn't know."

Her hands lay upon his eyes, cool and very sweet.

"It is so beautiful to be loved!" she said. "Ah, dearest, pity loveless men and women! They don't know what sunshine is. They live in the dark. I pity them. Swear to me that you'll love me always!"

"A foolish, poor oath!" said he. "I could not live without loving you. It's all my life, and I am in a panic when I think how short life is, at best. It won't hold even a little part of the love I have for you." Her hands slipped from his eyes to his shoulders, and he lifted his face towards her, white in the moonlight and very grave.

"Never doubt how much I love you!" he said. "It is all of me. It's my blood—and 'the blood is the life.' I'm not speaking lovers' speech. I'm speaking the sober, calm truth."

He got slowly to his feet, and they stood for a time silent, face to face in the moonlit gloom. The scent of the roses was all about them—cool and sweet—mysteriously enchanting, as all odours are in the dark; the softest of all soft airs stirred against their faces; they heard the small splash of water from the goldfish pool. The same thought came to them both in the same instant, and they met it with the helpless embarrassment of two children. Their first kiss hung between them, impalpable but imminent—gigantic in its importance, and a little terrifying.

Suddenly Blake held out his arms. The girl drew a quick breath and for a moment she stood still. Then she went into the arms he outstretched to her, and the arms closed round her strongly, and she lifted her beautiful face to his, and he kissed her lips.

Afterwards they clung together speechless and a little dazed, Vittoria's face in the hollow of Blake's shoulder, her hair against his cheek. And so they remained for a time which may have been minutes, but neither of them knew.

It was the man who roused himself at last with a quick sigh. He became aware of how thinly covered Vittoria was, and that her shoulders and arms were chill through the silk of her dressing-gown. He said—

"My dear love, you must go in. You will take cold here in the damp. I've been a brute to keep you so long. You must go in at once." She looked at him with absent eyes—a faint, fixed smile, and he knew that she scarcely heard him, that words could

hardly reach her through the spell in which she stood enwrapped.

He took her head between his two hands, looking his last upon her, close through that fragrant gloom. He saw her eyes, very wide and dark, and her parted lips. It seemed to him that she had well-nigh stopped breathing. He said—

"Go, now!" Vittoria nodded slowly.

"Yes. I'll go. I'll go."

"And my love with you!" cried Richard Blake, beginning to tremble. "My love and my life with you!"

She smiled upon him divinely, but she stood still, and he saw that he must be the first to go. He turned away, but came back for an instant, saying—

"There's something you ought to know. My father, who started some weeks ago for the South Pacific, has come back—or will be back in a couple of days. He went only as far as Honolulu. A long telegram of mine reached him there, telling him about—my love for you and about your father's attitude. So he returned to San Francisco. He telegraphed twice—long messages. He is coming to see your father. Perhaps, amongst us all—I don't know—but perhaps something can be managed."

The girl continued to look at him with that fixed smile, and he wondered if she had heard anything of what he had said. He asked her—

"Did you hear me—about my father?"

Once more she nodded.

"Yes, I heard." And so he turned away.

At the gate in the wall he looked back once, and she was standing there still, in the moonlight, tall and slender and very beautiful, her arms at her sides, and her black hair hanging down before her shoulders almost to her knees.

\* \* \* \* \*

But when he had been gone for some moments, Vittoria drew a little sigh and seemed to waken from her spell of dazed enchantment. She found her bedroom shoes upon the turf near by, thrust her feet into them, and went quietly up through the garden to the open door at the side of the house. There were no lights visible anywhere; the household was asleep and still. No one had been aware of her movements.

She went with dragging feet up to her own chamber and locked the door behind her. Then she cast herself down upon the bed, hiding her face in the pillows, and lay there still till the morning light came in to rouse her.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE MAN WHO LIVED IN HELL.

THE next three days passed very happily for Vittoria, though they passed almost without event of any kind. She did not see Beau Temple again, for he had been summoned to town on a matter of business. He called her up by telephone to say that he was going, and that he would be back late on the third day. She rode once with *Beatrix Faring*, and kept that lady at *Standish* for luncheon; but Mrs. Faring became aware that the girl was not ready to talk about her broken engagement or about her relations with *Richard Blake*, and so held her own tongue, and the conversation was rather stiff and conscious and quite absurd, and she went home earlier than she had meant to do.

So for three days Vittoria was left almost entirely alone, and was glad of it, for she had so much to reflect upon and to think about. It has been said that she was happy, and that is quite true. She was happier than she had ever been before in her life, though she loved with all her heart and soul, with all her conscious being, a man whom she might never hope to marry.

Women in such matters as these are beyond the simple, forthright comprehension of man, and young girls are beyond the comprehension of anybody—most of all, themselves. Where a man loves he must take possession or he is miserably unhappy—as impatient and as obstreperous as a little child, and he will perform the most incredible feats of ingenuity, or perhaps of valour, to gain that possession. But a woman can love and wait, and wait and dream over her love, and imagine and pretend to herself and be quite rapturous for months or even for years. It is a very interesting distinction, but it needs a modern German philosopher, and not the present simple-minded scribe, to examine it and turn the microscope upon it and write a big book with long words about its mysteries. The present scribe gives it up.

Vittoria was entirely without hope of ever being able to marry *Richard Blake*, but that could not cloud her beautiful tranquillity. He loved her and she loved him, and that was enough. She had already reached, she said to herself, the utmost vertiginous height to which human love can attain. She was quite sure that there was nothing more. She had only to shut her eyes and the miracle returned upon her. She stood once more in the circle of her lover's arms:

they held her fast—so fast that she could not breathe—and she saw his eyes very close above her, and her heart stood still, and he kissed her, and the world about them ceased altogether to exist.

It seemed to her that this was enough. In that one transforming kiss he had made her his own for ever—"sealed" her to him, as the expressive Mormon phrase has it. And she was quite sure that she could go through life very happily, very contentedly, with that knowledge and that memory to live upon. It would be wonderful, of course, incredibly sweet, if she could be with her lover always. She thought of that sometimes, as one might dream of the delights of a material heaven. Sometimes, too, she remembered what he had said about endurance coming to an end, and his storming *Standish* and carrying her off by main force. She thought of that, and thrilled to it, and the well-remembered fierceness of the man's tone waked something of its own kind in her, stirred for an instant mysterious, hitherto unknown depths. But for the most part she thought only of how much more fortunate she was than anybody else in the world, since she had *Blake's* faithful love.

Yet, despite this somewhat sublimated conception, she was not altogether unpractical. Few women are. Something *Beau Temple* had said to her, touching the future, remained in her mind, and she was quite determined to act upon it. If her father persisted, as she was certain he would do, in his present attitude, she could leave him for at least a large part of each year, and live in town. She would not break her promise to him and she would not quarrel with him unless he should force the quarrel upon her, but she had not promised to remain buried in the country for ever, and, now that a way of escape had been pointed out, she meant to avail herself of it. The fortune that her mother had left to her was not large, as fortunes go nowadays, but it was not small, either. Its income would be enough and more than enough for her wants. The *Farings*, she knew, would be glad to have her for as long as she would stay with them, and so would *Catharine Dudley*, and so would two or three others. She could even travel to her heart's content, when any of these friends were travelling, and later on, as she grew older, she could find some nice elderly woman who was alone in the world, and have a house of her own.

So, as she looked down the years which

were to come, she found that, after all, she might live, in most respects, a very normal sort of life and might see a great deal of Richard Blake. It seemed to her, as she thought of it, very satisfying, very delightful, and the fact that she was leaving Richard Blake's possibly different views out of her consideration never once occurred to her.

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As for Pender Fleming, during these three days no one ever knew what he felt or endured, in what manner he passed his grey or black hours. For that matter, no one knew how the man had passed the greater part of twenty years. Outwardly he sat in his book-lined study through the day and far into the night, or, at intervals, took long and solitary walks across the hills to the northward. But inwardly? No one knew about that. Even Beaumont Temple, who had sat with the man, argued and disputed with him over matters logical or sometimes political, even he only guessed—only remembered and inferred and made his surmises. And yet, though no one could speak from knowledge, though even Temple could only look on and guess, it is certain that this man's life was terrible, a haunted life full of bitterness so black that there are no words for it, full of wrecked and outraged love, of high pride trampled in the dust, of a still fury of hatred almost beyond measure.

The word "hell" is over-used, ragged, outworn. It has been tossed about so lightly that it no longer means much, but if, for a moment, it could be refurbished and restored to something like its old vigour, it would be the one word to set opposite Pender Fleming's life. One could say: "This man's life was a hell," meaning a place of spiritual torments more awful than can be described.

It will be remembered that the man must always have been a violent and passionate man, altogether intolerant of the wills of those about him, intolerant of their likes and dislikes, of their hopes and fears and imaginings when these did not appeal to himself. He must have had the savage and primitive sense of possession which such men always have, and he must have had also their curious and poignant shame over giving voice to such love and tenderness as may be in their hearts. Such natures sometimes love very deeply, but it is an agony to them to express their love.

All this is not meant by way of excuse for Pender Fleming. There is no possible excuse for the astounding selfishness of his life. It is more by way of explanation of

that almost insane fury of his, of his conduct towards Richard Blake and towards his own daughter.

And, after all, once the man's character is understood and granted, this second blow of Fate, after twenty years, must be acknowledged to be a shrewd blow. He had, so to speak, dedicated his life to hatred. He had immured himself with almost the completeness of an anchorite in his passionate desire to have done with that world which had wrecked him. Fancifully, we may see Pender Fleming going down the long, slow corridor of progress to the grave with two visions painted before him on the gloom—the picture of his one love and the likeness of the man who had robbed him. To keep the former picture fresh before him, stands Vittoria, so amazingly like her mother. Suddenly, thereupon, to make the other vision to breathe and speak after twenty years, rises the son of Creighton Blake, and the second Bianca turns to him as her mother to the man she loved, as naturally as a flower to the sun.

It was a shrewd blow Fate dealt to Pender Fleming there, incredibly shrewd. Yes, it may safely be said that he dwelt in hell.

He did not appear again at table after that first evening. (Can it have been that he realised his ill-success?) And Vittoria had no more speech with him. But once or twice during the three days she saw him out of doors, walking alone upon the hills to the north of Standish. So it may be that his familiar room had become unbearable to him. Once he seems to have had a moment of weakness—was it actual surrender? No one can say. He called up Lone Tree Hill by telephone and asked if Mr. Temple was at home. He did not ask to speak to him, merely asked if he was at home, and refused to give a name. But the servant with whom he spoke knew the voice, and said that his master was in London. Whereupon, as the servant said afterwards, "Mr. Fleming didn't seem to be exactly disappointed, sir. He seemed to be relieved, as you might say, sir."

This was on the second day, and, later in the same afternoon, Pender wandering solitary across the green uplands, fell in with an acquaintance—the Frenchman, De Coucy.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### THE FOUNDATIONS ARE SHAKEN.

THE blind Frenchman was riding, to take the air, and he was attended, as usual, by a

servant, who rode close beside and held his master's horse upon a leading rein. Pender Fleming paused at the top of the roadside bank to let them pass. It would have been like him to stand there in silence or even to retreat from view, but—he can hardly have been quite himself—he spoke a simple "Good afternoon," and the blind man, who had a blind man's unerring memory for voices, gave a direction to his servant, and the two reined in.

There passed commonplace words of greeting, perfunctory praises of the weather, which had remained miraculously fine, and M. de Coucy apologised for not having called in person at Standish after lunching there. (He had sent cards by Beau Temple the next day.)

"The good Beau would not permit it," he explained. "He told me that you were always deep in your books, and hated to be torn from them. So I did not come."

"I am sorry," Pender Fleming said. "I should have been glad of your call. Beau is apt to exaggerate. I hope you will take my word for his, and come when you find an idle afternoon." In the ordinary course of things, this geniality would have partaken of the miraculous, but both Beau Temple and Vittoria had noted with some surprise how Pender seemed drawn to the blind Frenchman on the one occasion of their meeting. Perhaps it was affliction calling to affliction. Pender never explained it.

"But this is an idle afternoon!" exclaimed De Coucy. "All my afternoons are idle. How if I take you at your very amiable word? Are we far from your Standish? How far?"

"Not above half a mile," said the other. "Will you come now? I shall be glad. Take the first turning to the left, just ahead here, and I will walk beside your horse."

The Frenchman wished to dismount, but Pender would not allow that, and so, politely wrangling, they turned up the near-by lane and were very soon at Standish.

There Pender Fleming, with a ready tact surprising to see in him, led his guest in through the house, guiding his steps with an unobvious hand upon the blind man's arm, quite as one might do with a man whose sight was perfect. He led him to that vast, dim study at the north, and pulled out a comfortable chair for him. De Coucy breathed the cool air of the place and nodded.

"You have books here," said he—"many books in leather bindings. This will be where you live and read.

"But," he complained, "there is no sunshine. The sun never comes here. Why is that?"

"I am a bird of dark plumage, monsieur," said Pender Fleming—"a night bird. The sun makes me blink. I—feel more at home in the shadows. Darkness and I are friends, I think—if, indeed, I have any friends. You are right, the sun never comes here. It is the north side of the house."

The Frenchman sat back in the comfortable chair and laid his elbows upon the arms of it, joining his finger-tips neatly together before him. He nodded his head.

"Yes," said he. "Yes, indeed. And yet—I am a sort of night bird, too, I suppose. Shadows and I are bed-fellows, if not friends. But I love the sunshine still. It warms me. I think that if I were never in the sun, I should grow dark inside and bitter and cold, like a cellar. I think we need the sun to keep us clean and sweet, as rooms do." He smiled across at his host, and Pender Fleming was once more amazed, as he had been at their first meeting, to observe how perfectly normal the man's appearance and bearing were. Most blind people, even when the eyes show no injury, betray their affliction by never moving the eyeballs or by the pose of their heads—thrown back a little in a listening attitude; but De Coucy's eyes moved as if they saw, and he held his head as normal people do. There was not the slightest sign to be seen in him of his infirmity, except, perhaps, that he seemed to listen with more than usual care, as if his ears were doing double duty. Doubtless they were.

The host proffered a box of cigars, saying—

"You'll find these enduring, I think. They are sent to me from Havana." But the blind man shook his head, smiling.

"Thank you," said he, "we in the dark do not smoke. One cannot taste it, you know." And the other flushed with chagrin over his mistake, and turned away, saying—"Of course. Of course. I forgot."

But when he had lighted his own cigar and had sat down again, he looked curiously across at his guest, and the man's unembarrassed reference to his infirmity must have given Pender courage, for he said—

"Tell me! We two have, I think, a good deal in common. We have both lost the best out of our lives, each in his different way, and we have had to go on living, maimed, crippled, set apart from mankind. Tell me, do you ever long for death to come and end it?"

"Oh, yes!" said the Frenchman readily. "Yes, indeed. I have wished for twenty-five years that I might die. I should be very happy indeed if I knew that I might die to-night—or to-morrow—even if it were to cost great pain. It is not so much my blindness (though that is a great deal) as the fact that—those who made life sweet to me went on ahead very long ago, and when I die I hope to rejoin them. I am a good Christian, though not a Catholic."

"There is the easy way out," said Pender Fleming, and gave a little shiver. But the other man shook his head with great decision.

"No! I shall never resort to that. In the first place, it is a sin, and in the second place, it is cowardly. I shall go on living until Heaven sees fit to let me off. Meanwhile, I find the world not insupportable. I have a few good friends who love me, and I retain my curiosity, and I still like a good dinner. I am a cheerful soul by nature."

"I am not," said Pender Fleming, and for a space his guest was silent, because there seemed to be nothing to say to that. Nevertheless, after a little pause, he said—

"Yet, my friend, you have much to live for. You have your daughter. I am alone in the world, but you have your daughter. Surely there can be no sorrow, no affliction, so overwhelming that it can drown your joy in that sweet and amiable young lady." (A new description of Vittoria!)

Pender Fleming stirred in his chair, but he did not speak, and presently the Frenchman went on.

"I envy you that care—that charge. It is a blessing which has never been granted me. To watch over her—to give her pleasure—to make her life happier day by day—surprise her with proofs of love—make sacrifices for her! To devote one's life to making another and younger life beautiful! To see her settled at last where her heart has chosen! (For in that I like your English ways better than ours. I find it charming that the young should follow where their hearts lead them.) In good time to hold one's grandchild upon one's knees! Ah, monsieur, I envy you your privilege! Can you be sorrowful in the face of that? I could not be."

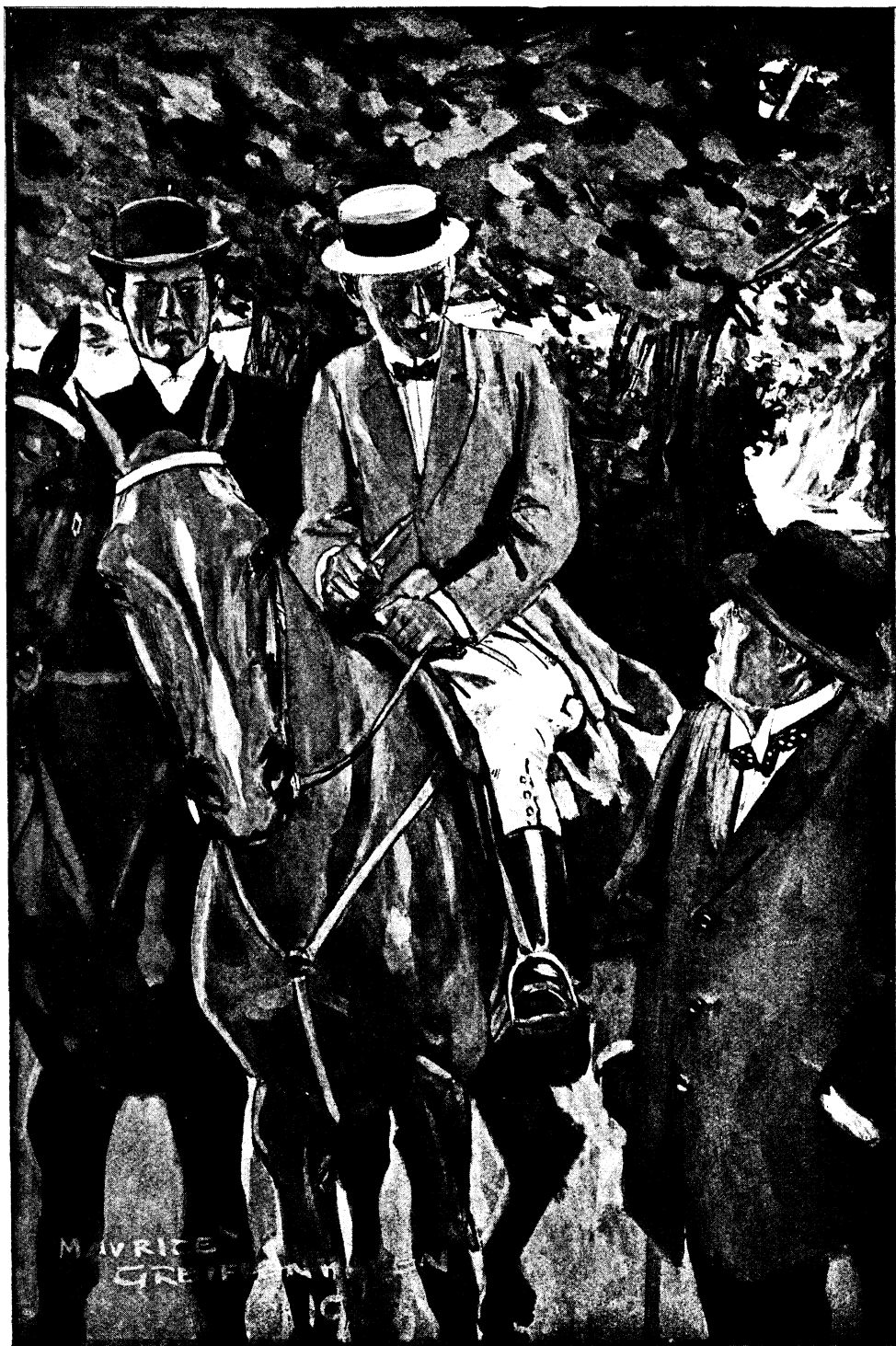
Pender Fleming's face was uplifted and terrible to see. But the blind Frenchman could not see it. He had spoken in all sincerity and in complete ignorance of the facts of the other man's life, for Beau Temple had told him no more than that Pender had

lost his wife many years back and had never recovered from the blow. This was all he knew. He suspected it was Pender Fleming with whom Temple had quarrelled recently, but he did not know even that. Beau's reticence in the matter seems a little extraordinary, but, then, he was a very reticent man about other people's affairs.

The Frenchman waited a moment for reply or comment from his host, and then went on, a little hastily, for it occurred to him that he had doubtless touched the body of an ancient grief, and he was sorry, though, after all, it had been the other man who had first referred to such matters. He said—

"While speaking of your charming daughter, I must tell you about a strange recollection which came to me this morning during my ride. When I first met Mademoiselle Fleming, a fortnight ago, I realised that she was curiously like some lady whom I had known long before—many years before. But at that time I could not remember who the lady was or where I had known her. I suppose my memory has gone on working ever since without my conscious direction—as memories so often do—and this morning *à propos* of nothing at all, it came to me who that lady was—that I had known her, never at all well, and only for a short time in Paris, nearly twenty years ago. She was, I think, one of the loveliest ladies whom Heaven has ever permitted to live for a little while here amongst us men—to prove to us what sweetness and light there can be—but she had suffered great sorrow and wrong until she could bear it no longer, and love had been stronger than law, and she had left the home which had been made unbearable to her, and had gone away with one who worshipped her faithfully.

"Monsieur, for many years I could not forget that poor lady and the pitiful impression she left upon me. I, who never saw her—but they told me that she was as beautiful as the daylight, as beautiful as the night in summer—could not forget her sweetness and her pain. It is very wonderful that Mademoiselle Fleming, who is scarcely more than a child, and who cannot have known deep sorrow, should be so like her. I should like to say that the lady found at last an enduring happiness to make up to her what she had suffered, but doubtless it was too late. She had left a little child behind her, monsieur—a little child which her husband had taken from her, saying she was not fit to hold it in her arms. That sweet and pitiful lady not fit! So her heart was



"They turned up the near-by lane."



broken—and she died. She knew a little happiness for a little time and then she died. God is at times inscrutable, monsieur. We cannot follow His great plans. We see such little pieces of them ! ”

With what must have been an incredible effort, the other man asked a question—speaking in a sort of whisper ; but the Frenchman did not heed the strained tone. His thoughts were afar.

“ What was—the name ? ”

“ The name ? ” De Coucy hesitated an instant. “ Ah, well, after all, the lady is dead—Heaven rest her sorrowful soul, and give it light and refreshment !—I suppose there is no reason why I should not speak the name after nearly twenty years. The name was Cromwell.”

“ Oh, my God ! ” said Pender Fleming in a choked cry. “ Oh, my God ! ” and fell to sobbing, with hard and terrible gasps. It was the name under which Creighton Blake and Bianca had lived during their one year together.

The blind Frenchman sprang to his feet, tingling from head to foot. The blood withdrew from his face, leaving it as white as paper. Illumination burst upon him in a single white flash that was like a flash of lightning. His brain was dazzled with the horror of it.

“ Her daughter ! ” cried the Frenchman, in an amazed whisper. “ Mademoiselle is the child ! And you— ” He drew himself up all at once very stiffly.

“ Monsieur,” said he in a sharp tone—“ monsieur, I beg that my servant may be called. It is impossible that I should remain here ! ”

There was only the sound of the other’s rending sobs—a terrible sound in that still place—and the Frenchman spoke again—

“ Monsieur, I have the honour to bid you good day ! ” He took a step forward, feeling before him with his riding crop, and after it, another step, moving in the direction of the door. But Pender Fleming controlled himself by some miracle of self-command, and caught the man by the arm.

“ No, wait ! ” said he, trembling. “ Wait ! Don’t judge me until you know. It’s not just to give judgment before you know. Bear with me a little while. Let me speak. I am alone in the world. My only friend has turned from me, my daughter has hardened her heart against me. I am alone. Listen for a little while, and then, if you wish, go—with the others.”

The Frenchman sat down and took his

head into his hands. So Pender Fleming told his story from the beginning, many years before, up to the quarrel with Beaumont Temple and its cause. He told it, of course, from his own side, from his own point of view, but De Coucy made, as it were, a running translation, having, to go by, his memory of Donna Bianca and Creighton Blake, his knowledge of Beau Temple and Vittoria, and his own judgment of the man who sat before him.

Even then he could not be pitiless. He could not but be sorry for this haunted wreck of a man who had suffered so deeply and who had caused so much suffering.

And when the story was done, he sat for a long time silent, his sightless eyes fixed upon the floor.

“ It is the most astonishing sequence of events that I have ever known,” he said at last. “ It is well-nigh incredible—incredible ! Did I not speak, a short time ago, of God’s great plans ? Here surely is one of them. What God denied to those two, long ago, He was storing up for the younger generation—for her daughter and for his son. It seems to me a great epic of sorrow and love—an epic that is lived instead of written. I am overwhelmed by it.” He turned a stern and earnest face towards his host.

“ Sorrow and love ! ” he repeated. “ Sorrow and love ! There has been enough sorrow. Too much, Heaven knows ! Let the rest be love—and peace—sunlight after shadow—the morning after night. The key is in your hand, monsieur. Stretch out your hand ! ”

“ No ! No ! ” cried Pender Fleming in a trembling voice. “ It is too much. I cannot do it.”

“ Cannot do it ! You cannot refuse to do it. I will not believe that there is a man living in this world who would hesitate to right such a wrong when it was in his power to do it. It is not a duty, it is a sacred privilege—a wonderful thing. Monsieur, you have been the cause of great suffering. You will have one day to answer to God for that. What will you put on the other side of the ledger to balance it ? God will require something assuredly, or it will go hard with your soul, monsieur, when God gives judgment upon you.”

“ Is all my world against me ? ” asked Pender Fleming, in a flat and tired voice. “ Is everybody against me ? ”

“ Yes, monsieur,” said the blind Frenchman—“ even God, I think. For surely it was God who brought these two young

people together, and He will not tolerate your interference, my friend. You must give way before Him."

The other shivered, for that was almost exactly what Beau Temple had said, only Beau had called God "Fate," as have many other people in this and other times. He did not answer. He remained silent for a little while, sitting lax with bowed head. He may have been thinking or he may have been sunk in a kind of thoughtless apathy. But in the end he asked timidly—a white and haggard eagerness upon his wrung face—some question about Bianca Fleming—or Bianca Cromwell, as she had chosen to be known.

So the Frenchman, who must have divined the man's shamed desire, told all that he knew or could remember about poor Bianca's life in France, of her failing health, of Creighton Blake's anguished efforts to save her, and of her final death in the little resort in the Pyrenees where the two had gone for mountain air. Pender heard him through in silence, his head bent, his hands clasped together—no sign about him of what went on within save that now and then tears dropped from his eyes and rolled down his pendulous cheeks, and they were tears of bitter anguish, that burnt like drops of molten metal.

But from that De Coucy went on to speak of Bianca's daughter. Despite his stiff and formal English, he was an eloquent man when roused, and he spoke well and appealingly. He drew poignant pictures. He showed how that old blot of sorrow and suffering and sin might be cleansed—wiped away, in the happiness of the younger generation—light born out of darkness—peace out of hatred and despair. He pictured Bianca's daughter, serene and at rest in her home, and he pictured the man of darkness, reborn through high renunciation, going tranquilly down through the remainder of his years, his grandchild on his knee.

He spoke well and shrewdly. He tapped deep and hidden springs there—those springs which in even the bitterest heart are never quite dry. They gushed in Pender Fleming's dark being, rose to his eyes in tears that were no longer drops of molten metal, but rivers of refreshment upon that arid soil. The man laid his arms upon the great table before him and buried his face in them. The very foundations of him stirred and shook, but they did not yet give way. They had been in place too long.

There fell between the two a space of silence. At its end the Frenchman said gently—

"Give the child back her promise! Let sunlight in after so much darkness!" He rose to his feet and stood waiting.

"I will—do what I can do," said Pender Fleming in a broken voice. "Don't press me now. I think I can bear no more to-day. Let me be for a little while."

"There is no time so good as now," said Raoul de Coucy; but the other said querulously—

"Not now! Not now! I—cannot bear any more now." He got with some stiffness to his feet, moving like an old and feeble man.

"Come to-morrow! To-morrow we will—settle it all." And after a pause he said—

"Bring Beau Temple with you, if he will come. I quarrelled with him. Tell him I am sorry. Tell him—ask him to come." And the blind man said—

"I will do that. I will do it with great gladness." He put out his riding crop, feeling before him, and his host led him by the arm to the door, and called a servant to take him in charge there.

"You will forgive me if I go no farther with you," he said. "I seem to be a little spent—a little spent." So they clasped hands and the door closed between them.

*(To be concluded.)*



# HER EMPLOYER.

By VICTORIA LEES.



ANNE FEATHERSTONHAUGH looked at the man and shuddered — Anne, whose mother had never allowed her to come into unprotected contact with the fish-monger or the

iceman. And this was her employer.

"Make yourself at home," he was saying. "You have the freedom of the whole office. Sayers Junior occupies this part." A young man with oily curls rose from his desk and bowed. "He's my nephew, and he's going to be a shining legal light, like his uncle. But he won't be much in your way. He's only published every little while, as they say in East Aurora; the rest of the time he spends in the solitude of his own chamber, reading law. That right, Jim? Well, he don't clutter up the office much with his presence, anyhow. Now come round to the other side of these bookshelves, and I'll introduce you to the rest of the establishment. Carrie, this is Miss Featherstonhaugh, the heiress to your throne. Here's the throne, Miss Featherstonhaugh," he said, indicating a wooden chair, from which a girl rose with a great clanking of wrist bangles and chate-laines. "Carrie's going to vacate it to marry a druggist uptown—one of our millionaires. Oh, he ain't, ain't he? Well, he's going to be after he buys borax at three cents a pound and sells it at fifteen cents an ounce some more. That's what we call dispensing. Oh, I know Charlie. I deal there."

Carrie tossed her head and laughed, displaying even, little, white teeth. She had a certain hard bright prettiness, which Anne disliked on the spot.

"Now I'll leave you two girls to get acquainted. Carrie's going to teach you all about the sacred mysteries of a law office and how to run a typewriter—also her own private system of shorthand, never made public before. Don't let her work you too hard. When you're at a loss for something to do, please consider my library at your

disposal; these tin boxes don't contain cake, or you'd be welcome to them, too."

He put a high silk hat on the back of his head, lit a cigar, and went out.

"Mr. Sayers is such a funny man!" Carrie said, looking after him admiringly. She turned to Anne and surveyed her from head to foot.

"You're awfully slight," was her verdict. "Do you lace? Of course, your mourning takes away from your size, and you're shorter than me, so it's hard to compare. Everyone tells me I'm slender for my height. Do you think I am? What would you guess I measure?"

"I really don't know. Could we get to work at once, please? I'd like to have some idea what my duties here are to be."

Carrie gave her a sharp look. "Oh, very well," she said, with a significant change of voice, "I'll teach you your duties right away;" and a trying afternoon followed for this petted girl, who had never known harsher fault-finding than: "Anne, dear, you're sitting in a draught," or "You really shouldn't wear your eyes out over that music." By the time Mr. Sayers returned she was in a quiver of irritation, and his first words roused her to open revolt.

"Well, little one——"

"I should like to be called Miss Featherstonhaugh, if you please."

"Well, well, don't get mad," he said comfortably, his big red face beaming upon her like a full moon. "I'd do a good deal to please you, but I've got a sore throat already making a gasp at that 'haugh' after I thought the whole name was out. It ain't a name for a lawyer's office, Featherstonhaugh ain't. I guess you'll have to be Miss F. in business hours."

Anne remembered a story she had heard of how her father quarrelled with his younger brother because he gave up pronouncing the last syllable of his name, and how he cut his nephew altogether because he gave up spelling it. She felt she could quite understand it now.

"And look here, Miss F.," proceeded her employer, "I'm going to give you a pointer right now. It don't pay to get mad. Good

nature's the thing that pays best in this world. *Best*, mind you. Why, look at me. Twenty-five years ago I came to Canada, a lad of fifteen, with nothing but a hole in my pocket, and where am I now? At the top of the legal profession—and still with a hole in my pocket!" He produced a pocket from beneath his coat, with an inch of puffy forefinger protruding from it. "And what placed me on this lofty pinnacle?" he continued, flourishing the finger oratorically. "Nothing in the world but good nature! What's that you're muttering, Carrie? Conceit? Well, conceit may have helped; it never does a lawyer any harm, anyhow. But what are you ladies doing in the office at this hour?" he asked, pointing to the clock. "Can't you see what time it is? Get along home with you!"

Anne was glad to obey, although "home" to her meant a boarding-house. She wanted to be alone. She had been hardly used, and the need of the moment was to attach the blame somewhere. The false confidence fostered by an annuity? The forgetfulness of one who should have remembered that it would come to an end? Her loyalty would allow of no reproach to that memory. She ended by fixing her grievance upon her mother's old friend who had secured the situation for her; and she got his letter out to feed her resentment upon its misleading phrases.

"A man of sterling character . . . a little of a German, a little of an Irishman, and a good deal of an American, mixed in just the proportions to give the happiest results. . . . His standing in the profession is good, in spite of manners of speech that will cause you to wonder sometimes how he got his barrister's degree. . . . The life may not be what you would choose in every particular.

It has certain advantages, however, not the least of which is the opportunity Mr. Sayers offers you of beginning work at once without preparatory training of any kind. Just now I can hear of no other opening that would suit you."

He might have said "for which you are fitted." That was the root of the matter, after all. She belonged to the great army of women who know how to do nothing, yet must do something. As she slowly and viciously tore the letter into little bits, she reminded herself that it was not for her to be fastidious.

That was the thought uppermost when she went back to work next day. Jim was not there, and Mr. Sayers was in the inner office; she could devote all her fortitude to enduring Carrie. But Carrie did nothing to make endurance easy; Anne's first snub had nipped her ready friendliness in the bud. She gave directions with an air of authority that was as galling as she could make it; she watched the work so closely and with such incessant admonition and warning that Anne made mistakes from pure nervousness. Then she criticised unsparingly.

A comma crept into Anne's copy of one of those legal documents where nothing less than a period is permissible. Carrie pointed it out in a way that was too much for Anne's overtaxed temper.

"You will remember that Mr. Sayers is my employer—not you, Miss Wells," she said, and saw a moment too late the advantage she had given her enemy.

Carrie was quick to see it. "Oh, very well," she said, going to the door of the inner office. "Mr. Sayers, will you kindly step this way?"

Mr. Sayers looked up from his writing and croaked: "In a minute," and presently



"A young man with oily curls rose from his desk and bowed."

appeared at the door, looking dull and abstracted.

"I'm sorry to interrupt you, Mr. Sayers," Carrie said with icy sweetness, "but Miss Featherstonhaugh don't seem to think I'm competent to teach her; she says you're her employer. Now, Miss Featherstonhaugh, show him your copy, and he'll tell you whether you're right or not. She don't think we use enough punctuation in this office, Mr. Sayers; she's going to reform us. Yesterday she taught me the right way to say 'petit jury.' It ain't 'petty'; it's 'petee'."

The badgered Anne bit her lips. She was clutching impotently after old standards of behaviour that would fit these utterly new exigencies.

"Well, Miss Featherstonhaugh," proceeded her tormentor, "you appealed to Mr. Sayers; there he is."

"Girls, girls," croaked Mr. Sayers, "don't get to sparring, and worrying, and nagging, and quarrelling, like a pair of sparrows. What's a comma compared to the peace of the community? Tut, tut, why can't you be good-natured, like I am? Look here, girls, what do you think makes me so handsome? Nothing but good nature. If you won't try it because it pays, try it because it'll improve your looks. Come, now, kiss and be friends."

Carrie was laughing by this time. "If I was to try and kiss Miss Featherstonhaugh, I wonder what would happen. She doesn't desire my friendship."

"You are quite right, Miss Wells." The repressed feeling of the whole morning was in Anne's tones.

Mr. Sayers groaned. "There are moments," he muttered as if to himself, "when a man wishes to be alone—and this is one of them." He pulled out his watch. "Cummings *vs.* Miller will be called in ten minutes; I must go. Carrie, I wonder if you could finish that work I was at—outlining the evidence—just notes of the salient points, to serve as a guide. You've got a head on you; I guess you can do it. If Jim comes in, send him over with it; if he don't, will you bring it over yourself, there's a good girl?"

"Of course I will, Mr. Sayers. I love going into the court-room. I just hope you'll be examining a witness when I go; I like to hear the way you make them say exactly what you want. And you don't bully them into it, either, like Haycroft."

"Miss Featherstonhaugh might come with you, so she'll know the way when you are

gone. It's sad to think of it, Carrie; you'll be gone soon. But we'll never forget you."

The girls walked to the court-house in the silence of an armed truce. Once within, however, Carrie was so interested that she forgot they were not friends.

"That's Haycroft, the plaintiff's lawyer," she whispered. "Listen, and you'll hear the nasty, cutting things he says about our side."

Anne listened, and for the first time in many weeks took a little pleasure in life.

"My learned friend has told you that you could purchase a whole herd of genuine sacred zebus for what the plaintiff wants for his cow. . . . Do not allow yourselves to be carried away by the polished eloquence of the defendant's counsel; as he would say himself, 'let's get down to facts.' . . . Allow me to quote again from my learned friend—and his diction is so striking and original that I shall quote *verbatim*—'It wasn't us that was made for the statute-books; the statute-books was made for us.'"

Anne glanced at the victim of this scarcely veiled ridicule. Even a child can recognise its own defects of speech when they are quoted by another. But if Mr. Sayers winced, he did not show it; she feared he did not feel anything. She looked at the jurymen; every face of the twelve wore an expression half puzzled, half distrustful. The same expression was on most of the faces in the audience. One man was listening with an appreciative twinkle of the eye, which commended him to Anne until Carrie pointed him out as the speaker's junior partner.

The language became too technical to follow. She looked over the tree-tops and thought of other tree-tops seen from other windows. Then the strangeness of it all struck her. She, Anne Featherstonhaugh, in a court-room! And nobody to be surprised or shocked—nobody to care.

"I suppose I may go now," she whispered to Carrie.

"Wait a minute; Mr. Sayers is going to speak." Carrie was fluttering with excitement.

When Mr. Sayers rose to his feet, his face was heavy and lifeless. When he began to speak, his voice was a croak. It soon warmed into a mellow huskiness, however; the lines deepened between the rolls of fat in cheeks and chin, his eyes lost their dullness, and a rich smile overspread his face. The jurymen moved in their seats with a look of relief and contentment, as if they were settling themselves to listen to something they understood and liked. Soon they were all grinning

broadly. Sayers was entertaining them with the kind of humour they had learned to expect from him. It was not humour of the highest order; it could not be reproduced without an apologetic rider to the effect that "you had to hear him say it himself to get the good of it"; but it was genial. The geniality was what told. It fairly radiated from him, until it warmed the jury into a corresponding glow, and disposed it, as one could see, very kindly towards the speaker.

Anne left the court-room while he was speaking. She was glad to find the general luncheon over at her boarding-house, and sorry when her solitary meal was interrupted

make Miller pay for not mendin' it—said he'd go in by the early train and secure Sayers. But Miller didn't wait for no train. He walked and got in an hour ahead. Most generally both sides try to get Sayers to take a case. Haycroft's clever, too—they do say he's cleverer than Sayers. But he's awfully sarcastic," and Mrs. Ferrit's face wore the look of dissatisfaction Anne had observed on the faces of jurymen and spectators in the court-room. "Sarcasm is not popular with the masses," she concluded silently.

Mrs. Ferrit heaped her plate with cold meat and fried potatoes. "Mr. Sayers is an awfully nice man, ain't he?" she said, with a



"Yesterday she taught me the right way to say 'petit jury.' It ain't 'petty'; it's 'petee.'"

by the appearance of her landlady in the door between the kitchen and the dining-room.

"I thought I'd come and sit by you and get the news," Mrs. Ferrit said, putting back the stray locks of her untidy grey hair. "Is Sayers goin' to get Miller off of payin' for that cow?"

"I'm very sorry, but I'm afraid I can't tell you anything about it."

"Oh!" Mrs. Ferrit looked disappointed. "I thought, being in Mr. Sayers' office, you might know. But Sayers'll win. He always does when there's a jury. They say as soon as the cow went through the footbridge, Cummings told someone he was goin' to

sudden gleam of friendliness in her mean little eyes.

"Really, my acquaintance with him is slight yet—"

"Well, I never knew anybody take two whole days to make up their mind about Mr. Sayers. Everybody that's ever worked for him has liked him. He's the kindest man. I can tell you it's him you have to thank that you're as comfortable as you are."

"I don't understand you, Mrs. Ferrit."

"Well, I don't mind telling you just what passed between us yesterday when I met him on my way to the market. He said: 'I believe you've got the little girl that's going to run my typewriter for a boarder, Mrs. Ferrit,



and I'll take it as a personal favour if you make her as comfortable as you can. At the best, this is a change for her,' says he; 'she ain't used to makin' her own way in the world.' 'I don't believe she's fit for it, Mr. Sayers,' says I. 'Don't you be alarmed, Mrs. Ferrit,' says he. 'She's no bigger'n a minnow, but she's got grit. I know grit when I see it. She'll pull through,' says he, 'but there's rough times ahead of her, for she's shy and she's proud and she's been used to an easy life. Now, it wouldn't do no harm, Mrs. Ferrit, if you was to add the little touches that make a boarding-house feel like home. It wouldn't cost no more, either,' says he, with a wink. And that's how you come by all the extra little comforts," concluded Mrs. Ferrit. "There's not many people in this town wouldn't go out of their way to do Mr. Sayers a personal favour if it lay in their power."

"I didn't know that I was receiving comforts not included in my bill," Anne began, and then she leaned back in her chair and laughed hysterically. "I'm really at a loss to know what they can be," she added with sincere wonder.

"There's gratitude for you!" Mrs. Ferrit exclaimed, her eyes snapping ominously. "Didn't I see to your coffee with my own hands this morning, so's it would be hot and strong, and didn't I bring it to you in my own china cup?" And she proceeded to tell about other boarding-houses she knew where Anne would have found the table cleared an hour after lunch-time. But Anne sat suddenly upright and said in a tone that closed the conversation—

"In future, Mrs. Ferrit, give me what I pay for and no more. It was impertinent of Mr. Sayers to interfere."

"Just as you please, Miss Featherstonhaugh," said her landlady, leaving the table with an angry flutter of her soiled print dress. Next morning, when the servant brought her coffee in a thick and chipped stoneware cup, splashing it into her saucer on the way, Anne was forced to admit that in a boarding-house there may be deeps below deeps of discomfort.

It provoked her that her employer did not seem to observe an additional frigidity in her manner after this. He spent most of the following week at the court-house, and in his brief visits to the office his own geniality determined the climate there.

He was in court one morning, his nephew, as usual, was absent, and Carrie went out to order some office supplies. For the first time

Anne had the office to herself. It was cool and spacious, and the high walls, lined with tier upon tier of leather-bound books, gave it an air of studious retirement; without its occupants Anne felt that she could almost like it. Steps sounded along the passage. As she sat idly wondering which of the three she most hoped it would *not* turn out to be, the door was pushed open and a well-built, clean-shaven young fellow hurried in, with his eyes bent upon the sheaf of papers in his hand. Anne recognised Mr. Haycroft's partner.

"Can I get some stamps in a hurry, Miss Wells?" he asked. His manner was quite respectful, but when he looked up and discovered his mistake, there was a change in it that delicately recognised the difference between Miss Wells and Anne. "Excuse me; I thought I should find Miss Wells here. Perhaps *you* could kindly give me some law stamps?"

Anne could not have believed that merely to be addressed in the manner to which she had always been accustomed would bring on a rush of homesickness—the sad homesickness of the homeless. Her eyelids turned burning hot. She was glad to hide for a moment in the vault, and when she returned with the book containing sheets of stamps between its pages, she was thankful that the young lawyer kept his eyes from her face, and busied himself attaching the stamps to his papers as she gave them to him.

"A fifty-cent, please, now two ten-cents, a two-dollar, a four-dollar, one, two, three, four, five ones, another fifty, a seventy. That's right, thank you. What does it all come to?"

He had paid for the stamps and left the office, and Anne was about to put the book and money-box back in the safe, when she took another look at the list of figures she had hastily jotted down. She thought she saw a mistake in the addition, but before she could make sure, Carrie came in.

"I met young Thorne on the steps. What did he want? Stamps? You'll have them all crumpled up if you leave them sticking out of the book like that. I hope you made a note of what you gave him and what he paid. Let me see if it's right."

But Anne had discovered that it was not right, and with a vague idea that she could make it right afterwards, and that just now the only important thing was that Carrie should not know, she had twice changed a five to a three while Carrie was hanging up her hat.

"What's that? 'Five one-dollars, five

dollars' or 'three one-dollars, three dollars'? Three? Well, I don't believe Mr. Sayers can make it out. You'd better write it plainer. And then you can go; there's nothing more for you to do to-day."

Anne went to her boarding-house and shut herself into her little bedroom, where the walls were so close together that her thoughts seemed to beat back upon her. Young people do not wish for death so often as they think they do; but Anne was really wishing for it now, for herself and all her contemporaries, and several generations after them. Nothing less could bury her disgrace deeply enough. She was stunned with surprise. The Anne Featherston-

haugh she had known—the Anne of the dear, safe, uneventful old life—would never have done that thing. To be sitting here, freezing and burning with fear of *being found out*—and by such people as Carrie and Mr. Sayers! It was too ridiculous! It was too terrible!

When she arrived at the office next morning, young Thorne was coming out. Her first thought was that the error had been discovered, but hope revived a little when Thorne put his head in at the door again to say: "Don't be too jubilant over Cummings *vs.* Miller, Mr. Sayers; we're going to beat you yet, if we have to carry it to the foot of the Throne." He almost ran into Anne when he turned. "Oh, I beg your pardon," he said. "I've just been in to rectify the mistake we made yesterday. Mr. Sayers tells me you discovered it too." He held the door open for her to pass in, and shut it behind her, cutting off all chance of retreat.

She found the outer office empty. Mr. Sayers' voice came from the inner office.

"Now, don't get excited, Carrie. What's that? Well, what are you after?"

Carrie's voice came from the vault. The words were not distinguishable. Then Mr. Sayers' deliberate tones—

"Oh, yes, I see. But I don't want you to explain. Hand me that paper. Hand—me—that—paper! Now, Carrie, you're a good little girl, but you've one fault; you want to be the cook and the mate and the captain bold of the whole outfit, and you ain't big enough. You ain't big enough. I'll explain to *you* about that paper. The little one fixed it for a mare's nest, to trip you up, and then she come to me with a private explanation.

You made her mad with your bossy ways, and she wanted to get even."

"That's not true, Mr. Sayers, and it wasn't true what you said to Thorne. You're trying to screen that high and mighty young lady, who feels herself too good for me and you and all of us, but ain't too good to falsify accounts."

Carrie's voice rose ever higher. Mr. Sayers' tones

were like the bass-viol following the oboe.

"Of course it's not the truth. Did you ever know me to tell the truth when I didn't have to? Lying's as easy to a lawyer as rolling off a log. A lawyer ain't got no conscience; he has no use for it. Of course it's not the truth, but it's the story me and the little one's going to fix up for you, if you don't hold your tongue, and it'll turn the laugh on you, never fear. To think you've been all this time in my office, and haven't learned to hold your tongue yet! No, it ain't the truth, but I'm going to tell you the truth now, so listen well. You nagged at that poor, lonesome young thing and



"In a boarding-house there may be deeps below deeps of discomfort."

worried her and riled her till you got her into that state of mind that it was impossible to say: 'I made a mistake.' There's the truth for you! Now I'll tell you what you'll do, Carrie. You just put on your hat and jacket and go out and enjoy this fine spring sunshine; it'll do you good. Take an open car and ride out to Eastboro; you'll feel different when you come back."

They emerged from the inner office, Mr. Sayers with his hand on Carrie's shoulder, pushing her forward. His face did not change when he saw that Anne was there, but Carrie stopped short and sent her a look that scorched her. Without apparent effort, Mr. Sayers kept her from looking in that direction again.

"We're going to give Carrie a half-holiday," he explained. "She's as cross as two sticks to-day, and I don't want her in my office with a frown on her pretty face. Put on your jacket, Carrie. Who runs this show, you or me? Me, I guess, to-day. Here, get into this jacket. Now, don't get mad and stick the hatpin into that massive brain of yours. You go and get Charlie to take you to Eastboro, and tell him I said to give you ice cream in the garden—two saucers, with all the trimmings. Tell him to do it up handsome; it's my treat."

He pushed Carrie out of the door and stood holding it open and looking after her. "Whew! I'd rather fight all the Crown Prosecutors in the Dominion than one woman! Women are the very—" he closed the door and turned to Anne. "I mean," he concluded smoothly, "women are the very nicest things in the world."

If he intended by his nonsense to relieve the situation of its strain, one glance at her face must have told him that it was not to be done. His own face changed. He looked at her with eyes that were searching, but fatherly and kind—the kindness of a surgeon who sees that he must probe a wound before he can give relief.

He had the unlucky memorandum in his hand. "Here, burn it," he said, holding it out to her. Anne took it and tried to speak, but her throat felt parched and dry. "You needn't say a word," he went on. "I know all about it. It didn't come out right, and you changed some of the figures to make it come out right, and then you wasted a whole night wishing you hadn't. And just about now you feel fit for the company of defaulting bank managers and absconding clerks. Well, you ain't a mite more dishonest than you were before you did it. When you get to the

corner of Emmet and Carthcart Streets on your way uptown, you'll see a fifty-pound weight hanging from a plate mended with somebody or other's glue. Now, that ain't no real test. You just take and wash that plate, and when you're drying it give it the gentlest little wiggle, and there it is—one-half in each hand. That's the way with you. You wouldn't stoop to pick up a million dollars if it was lying at your feet, but Carrie gave the little wiggle that found the weak spot out. 'Am I going to be humiliated by a girl like that?' said you. Now, take her the right way and Carrie isn't such a bad little girl—if she does wear bangles and say 'ain't.' Eh?" as Anne started and looked at him in surprise. He pointed his huge forefinger at her. "Oh, I know you! Do you think I can't see this establishment with your eyes? Why, the boss's own brand of English don't suit you any better. Well, I might fix it up a little, that's a fact; only, you see, I'd be afraid of gettin' into the habit of addressing juries in gilt-edged language, and they wouldn't like it. The plain speech of the people's what they want from me. Now, don't say 'What an old humbug!' There's no humbug about it. This is my own native grammar; I begun to use it forty years ago, since which time I have used no other."

He paused, but Anne still sat silent. "Now, we've gone to the bottom of this affair," he went on, "and that's to be the end of it. E, n, d, end. Do you understand? Well, why don't you quit looking troubled, then? Do you think I'm going to have anyone round this office that looks as if she knew she was a genuine black-hearted desperado? It'd ruin my practice in a week. I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll hypnotise you, so's the first thing you know you'll forget how wicked you are."

He waved his hands about with a pretence of making hypnotic passes, at the same time smiling one of his richest smiles and beaming upon her with eyes full of good-will; and, ridiculous as it seemed, Anne had a sense of a lightened load; the blood came back into her lips and she could smile.

"Ah, that's right," her employer said; "now you'll find you'll never worry about that little matter again. You'll sleep like a baby to-night, and in the morning you'll rise as fresh as one of Mrs. Ferrit's breakfast rolls. You'll wonder what in the world you were fretting about yesterday. Look here." His voice changed. "You're pretty small to be all alone in the world. I'm going to take care of you. I'm going to be your

Fairy Godfather. Perhaps we'd better say Good Ogre—I don't believe you have imagination enough for the Fairy Godfather. Well, call me what you like, I'm going to protect you, anyway. I know what it feels like to play a lone-hand on a ten and an ace; I did it younger than you, and with more of the trumps against me. If you haven't heard it already, Miss F., you soon will hear why my poor father came to Canada and why he shot himself next day. They don't lay it up against me, but they don't forget it. . . . Yes, I'm going to protect you, whether you like it or not, but I don't mind admitting that it would be easier if I knew you hadn't no objection. What do you say, little one?"

Anne held out her hand, and when the fat fingers closed over it in a hearty grasp, she did not shudder. Her surrender was complete.

"That's all right. Now I must be off," and Mr. Sayers took out his cigar-case. "When Jim comes in, tell him I want him right away at the court-house; you have the whole business of the firm on your hands this morning. Here's the key of the safe."

And in the quiet of the office, where solitude seemed emphasised by the shelves full of books that had nothing to say to her, Anne sat that morning and reconstructed her universe. It was a humiliating process, but the result was peace.

Her employer's meditations, as he walked up the street, were far from peaceful. His hat was pushed off his forehead, and he was puffing furiously at a cigar.

"It won't do," he was thinking; "that little girl has got to have a home of her own and somebody to take care of her. This is too much of a change from the sheltered life; might as well blow up a soap-bubble good and thin, and then use it for a punching-bag. Now, let me see. Who am I going to

marry her to? There's young Thorne. He says 'suggest' and 'clark' and 'figyure,' just the way she does. How would he do?"

He narrowed his eyes critically, as if the idea had been conjured into visible shape before him. His sense of fitness was satisfied, and yet he frowned.

"It ain't a business I'd go in for the fun of the thing—match-making ain't," he said to himself; "and if I did, these two ain't the raw material I'd select. They're not what you'd call combustible, either of them. But when a man appoints himself somebody's guardian, he's got to think of duty as well as pleasure."

Here he was stopped by an anxious client with a lawsuit on hand, who wished to have some doubts settled that had arisen in his mind overnight.

Sayers patted him on the back. "Don't you worry, my son," he said, and his mellow tones were reassuring. "We're going to succeed all right enough. With a case like yours we couldn't fail if we tried, but this is a firm that don't deal much in failures anyhow. It ain't our meteor, as we used to say in Paris, dear Paree."

"No," he pondered, when the client had gone on his way, comforted, "we're not much given to failing in the office of Henry B. Sayers, and if we go into this match-making business, we go in to win. But it ain't going to be child's play, neither. I've got to do some hard thinking. To bring them together in a social way, I'd be quite a little liable to make blunders in etiquette, wouldn't I? Better stick to the office; I'm more at home there. The uncongenial surroundings may send them edging up a little closer together, too. Hm-in! The office *and* the boss. Especially the boss. His strongest hold is to be his simple, unaffected self, and let contrast do



"She never was communicative. Perhaps she's gone back to where she came from."

the rest. Just shine out in his strongest colours, with no mitigating half-tones."

He threw away his cigar with a gesture of impatience. "Pr—r! What a contract! I wouldn't undertake it for anybody else in the world. But I've got to take care of that little girl. I ain't going to forget the way she looked when she held out her hand—as if she trusted me. Just after I had been giving her a hint of the Sayers family history, too."

Whatever Mr. Sayers' other gifts as match-maker, he had one that is not common. He kept his victims in a state of complete unconsciousness. When Thorne went into his office on business that should occupy five minutes and stayed half an hour, he merely thought as he went away that Sayers was an entertaining fellow, and wondered how that exceedingly nice stenographer of his could stand his want of culture, feeling a little impatient at a state of things that threw such women into such contact. And Anne marvelled that she had been beguiled from her work into a pleasant little talk, and was conscious of a feeling of expansion, such as a convolvulus might experience in the sun, but saw no finger of intention in it.

When two people are congenial, the fact may be discovered in a lawyer's office as well as anywhere else. Before many months these two had advanced so far in the pleasant ways of intimacy that Thorne would sometimes lend Anne a new book, or Anne would help him with suggestions about music for an amateur string quartette to which he belonged. Once, in a December storm, Thorne overtook her on the way to the office, and without apology took the heavy, ice-sheathed umbrella from her hand and held it against the wind while he steadied and guided her steps.

And then—while his schemes were apparently maturing under his eyes—Sayers entered the office one morning to find Anne sitting at her writing-table in an attitude so expressive of disaster that, although her back was turned to him, he asked at once: "What's up, little one? Anything gone wrong I can set right?"

"Yes," she said, throwing down her pen, "you can help me by answering this for me." She handed him a note dated that morning and written on the office stationery of Haycroft and Thorne.

"If you will not think it too cheeky of me to ask you a favour," he read, "please cut Sayers' nephew. He has just repeated a spiteful little story that your predecessor

in the office invented about you. It's really beneath the notice of any sensible person, but I couldn't resist teaching him a lesson, and I warned him that I should tell you."

"Hm-m-m, so Mistress Carrie has been talking. Yes, I'll attend to it," said Mr. Sayers, pocketing the note.

Anne looked up at him with quick suspicion. "What will you say?"

"I'll tell him it was a joke you'n me put up on Carrie, just as I warned her."

"Then I'll answer it myself. He must be told the truth."

"Told the fiddlesticks! A lawyer's office ain't no place to tell the truth. Not un-mixed, it ain't. I'll put in the right amount, never fear."

For answer, Anne drew a sheet of writing-paper to her and dated it.

Sayers took it from her.

"Now, look here, little girl, you leave this affair to me. Just see if you can't trust your godfather for once; he ain't going to neglect your interests up yonder because he looks after them down here. It's all right. If mortals could see into things as plain as the Recording Angel can, they wouldn't need to get truth fixed up for them the way they do. But they can't, and sometimes the plain truth cheats them worse than anything you can give them. You tell Thorne you falsified my accounts, and you may be writing the truth, but he'll read the biggest kind of lie. All I ask is, say nothing till I give you leave, and then tell him what you like."

Anne began on another sheet of paper.

At that moment the office opened, and Thorne entered.

Both were men quick to think and act. Sayers had changed his whole plan of campaign to suit the inopportune accident before Thorne had lifted his hat. While Sayers went to his desk and returned, Thorne took the chance to say in a low voice: "I was afraid you might misunderstand my note, Miss Featherstonhaugh, so I came over as soon as I could."

His eye caught his own name on a sheet of notepaper, and he saw that a tear was obliterating it.

"May I speak to Miss Featherstonhaugh for a minute, Mr. Sayers?" he asked.

"For an hour if you like," Sayers answered, his head pushed forward, his lower lip protruding, as he counted the roll of bills in his hand. "I think you'll find this all right, Miss F.—your back salary and four weeks in advance." He returned Thorne's

note to her, ostentatiously spread open. "Thank you for the reading of it. Of course, it must make it plain to you that your usefulness in this office is over."

She took the money mechanically.

"I don't understand," she said, looking up with a white face. "You knew it all before."

"Oh, yes, I heard Carrie's story, and I knew she was telling the truth, but I thought I had shut her up."

Without looking in Thorne's direction, he was aware of a change; the friendly lad had given place to Haycroft's junior partner.

After an awkward pause, Thorne said coldly: "I'm sorry to have caused trouble by my unlucky note. Of course, I shouldn't have written it if I had thought there was one word of truth in the story. There's not, Miss Featherstonhaugh?" he pleaded, dropping his guard.

"Oh, yes, there is," Sayers said. "She was just writing to tell you so, weren't you, Miss F.? She wanted me to do it, but I wasn't going to help Haycroft and Thorne to get on to worn spots in our coat-of-mail—eh, Thorne? I wanted to wait till I could say: 'Miss Featherstonhaugh, *late* of our office.' There wasn't much to the story, anyhow; it was a tuppenny-ha'penny little affair, at the best. But this office has got to be above suspicion, so——" He finished the sentence by picking up Anne's fur gauntlets from the table and handing them to her. She had not taken off her other outdoor things.

He held the door open for her. She walked towards it with a dazed look in her eyes.

"Miss Featherstonhaugh!" called Thorne, and hurried after her.

Sayers went to the window and looked through the slats of the shutter. Anne was walking very quickly. Once she opened her hand and looked at the roll of bills he had given her, as if wondering what it was she was carrying in such a tight clasp. Then Thorne said something that made her slacken her pace. Now he was talking eagerly and she was listening.

Sayers raised his podgy hands with a gesture of paternal benediction.

"He didn't rise to the occasion with all the alacrity I could have wished, but he rose. Whew, it was taking risks! The next stenographer in this office is going to be a boy."

He sat down to his correspondence, but that look of Anne's came between him and the paper.

"I'll go to her boarding-house and make it all right with her this evening," he thought. "I couldn't have her thinking mean things of me overnight."

But Mrs. Ferrit told him Anne had gone.

"She said she'd left your office for good, and she packed up and went by train this afternoon."

"We did have a little quarrel to-day, Mrs. Ferrit, but I didn't think she'd take it so seriously, and I came to make it up with her. Can you give me her address?"

"I cannot, Mr. Sayers. She never was communicative. Perhaps she's gone back to where she came from."

Mr. Sayers felt sure she had not. He caught sight of her writing on an envelope lying on the hall table. He picked it up, and finding it heavy, shook it. Loose change rattled.

"What's this?" he asked.

"It's money for her washerwoman."

He deliberately cut the envelope open and drew out a note, which he read. It contained directions to have her washing sent on, and gave an address.

"I suppose I might have got it from Atherton," he said, as he copied it into his notebook, "but it would have taken too long."

About noon of the following day he was sitting in a parlour of a small city house, waiting for an answer to his request to see Miss Featherstonhaugh. He looked about him and tried to guess whether this was a boarding-house or the home of a friend. He had just recalled hearing her speak of a distant cousin in this city, when he heard a step on the stairs. Then he remembered that he had not the least idea what he was going to say to her.

When she saw who it was, she held out her hands with a little sound of relief.

"You weren't in earnest! Tell me you weren't!" she cried.

He drew her hands together and held them. Her eyes were appealing to him for an explanation. "It was a poor joke—if you meant it for a joke."

"It wasn't exactly a joke," he said slowly. "Sit down and I'll tell you all about it."

She sat down and waited. He walked twice the length of the room and then seated himself facing her.

Nobody had ever before heard Sayers talking to hide confusion, and he could almost believe that his present audience meant to make the most of her opportunity. He saw, at least, that she was not going to help him on, so he made a plunge.



"Well, the long and short of it is, Thorne was the man I picked out as most likely to fill all the requirements of an adopted son-in-law. He seemed your kind, and I thought you liked him."

He raised his eyebrows inquiringly, but her face remained expressionless.

"And things appeared to be going on as smooth and pretty as a serial in a fashion magazine, till that plaguy old story of Carrie's turned up again. You see now why I didn't want it repeated to Thorne at that early stage of the proceedings—I didn't know what the effect might be. And then when he came into the office and I saw he was going to hear it—well, I did some pretty quick thinking. I made up my mind he'd got to hear it in such a way that he'd come to the point right away quick if he thought as much of you as I guessed he did. Now, Miss F., it's up to you to tell the rest. Was it an inspiration or a bad break? Am I a genius or a brute?"

"Mr. Thorne did ask me to marry him after we left your office yesterday."

"Well?"

"Well, that's all there is to it. I had something else to think about just then. You had hurt me terribly, Mr. Sayers."

Sayers dropped his face into his hands. When he lifted it, it was all distorted with feeling.

"I hurt myself more, little one," he said huskily. "Last night was the first time since my father died I ever sat up with a sore heart. I knew I thought a heap of you, but I didn't know *how* much till you went out of my office yesterday. I felt like I did once when I was a boy and put my big foot on a kitten's paw. And all day long I didn't know which I wanted most: to kill Thorne if he didn't ask you, or to kill him if he did. . . . Then when I found you'd gone, I didn't

care much for anything but to find you ag'in."

"I'm glad you suffered," she said vindictively. "You deserved it."

"Oh, if that gives you any satisfaction, I guess the bad deeds of a lifetime have been paid for in the last twenty-four hours, as far as suffering can do it. I didn't know one small person could give a man so many bad quarters of an hour. You see, I never adopted my stenographer before."

There was an expression in her eyes he could not read. A wave of deeper red surged over his face.

"Look here, little one," he broke out with sudden energy, "this ain't one of those fool *matinée* cases where the man gives the woman up to a better man. I hope you know I ain't such a conceited idiot. You do, don't you?"

She gave him one of her faint little smiles.

"Now, what does that mean?" he asked, throwing himself helplessly back in his chair.

But she would not help him. She laid her hands quaintly together in her lap and said in her primmest manner—

"To come back to business, Mr. Sayers, if I should need references——"

But he leaned forward and seized her hands.

"Look here, little one," and there was something in his eyes that shattered the primness, "you don't mean to tell me that you could ever think of me for one minute as anything more than a Fairy Godfather? I *couldn't* have such luck."

She resigned her hands to him and met his look with a brave sincerity.

"When I left your office yesterday, Mr. Sayers," she said quietly, "I found that I was leaving all I cared for in the world behind."

## PIGEONS.

**R**USSET brown and silver grey—  
Purest white against the sky,  
Comes a bright and happy day  
When our hopes are high.

Ah! the blue is overcast,  
Hard and bitter comes the rain;  
Pigeons frightened, fluttering fast,  
Crouch outside my pane.

Pigeons! Pigeons! floating high,  
Emblems of our feeble trust;  
One day rising towards the sky—  
Next, down in the dust.

EILY ESMONDE.



I. RECEPTION OF HAROLD BY KING EDWARD.

II. THE FUNERAL OF EDWARD.

*Scenes from the Bayeux Tapestry.*

## ENGLAND'S STORY IN PORTRAIT AND PICTURE.

### V. HAROLD II., WILLIAM I., AND THE NORMAN CONQUEST.

THE first mention that we get of Harold in history tells of his being raised to the rank of earl at the age of twenty-three, according to the computation that 1022 was the year of his birth.

Pictorial art gives us no record of his early days. It chronicles nothing of Earl Godwin's banishment, which Harold shared, and the cause of which reads as peculiarly trivial even for an occurrence in days when human life was rated low. William of Malmesbury and others, who attribute the whole affair to outcome of the bitter enmity which existed between Godwin's family and the Normans, relate how King Edward's sister, Goda, brought up in Normandy, and married to Count Eustace of Boulogne, came on a visit to her brother, and how, on her landing at Dover, certain of her followers killed, in an effort to obtain, or compel, harborage in the town, either the master or man of some lodgment. It was a scuffle common enough in those unruly times, and, like many another small cause, it led to serious results. We have no specific description of it, and, indeed, some historians give the fray

as occurring in Canterbury, while others avouch it to have been one of the Frenchmen and not an Englishman who was killed. But, whatever were the facts of the occurrence, Earl Godwin was sent for in haste to quell the riot which followed, and his high-handed method of dealing with the foreigners induced the Count to take himself and his grievance straight to Edward. Then Godwin and his sons called their people to arms. Knowledge of their uprising was brought to the king's ear, and swiftly circulated orders sped through the country summoning the loyal to their monarch's side. When, therefore, Godwin reached Gloucester, where the king then was, and demanded of him, under menace of hostilities, surrender of the Count of Boulogne and his followers, Edward, learning that he was secure of support, and seeing a prospect of being rescued from what Florence of Worcester describes as "the tyranny of Godwin," refused concession to the request, and appointed an assembly of peers before whom the matter might be tried. Godwin, mistrustful of his cause or of the violence of his



I. THE NORMAN FEAST.

II. THE COUNCIL OF WAR.

*Scenes from the Bayeux Tapestry.*

adversaries, and accompanied by his sons Sweyn and Harold, fled from the face of his incensed master, who, with the approval of the Witan, pronounced him, his people, his army and his children, outlaws, and their lands confiscate.

England, we must remember, was not the united England of to-day, and the power of its different ruling earls was often a great menace to the throne. Especially was this the case at the time of which we are writing. Mercia, the domain of Leofric, Earl of Coventry, was bordered on the north by Northumbria, then ruled by Siward, whose earldom extended from the Humber to the Tweed, on the east by Essex, from which Harold ruled the earldoms of East Anglia, Cambridge, Huntingdon, and Middlesex, on the south by Berkshire, where Godwin himself ruled as Earl of Wessex and Kent, whilst on the west it was hemmed in by Gloucester, Hereford, and Somerset, over which God-

win's son Sweyn, the Earl of Oxford, held sway.

On the fiat of outlawry being pronounced against Godwin and his family, his vast

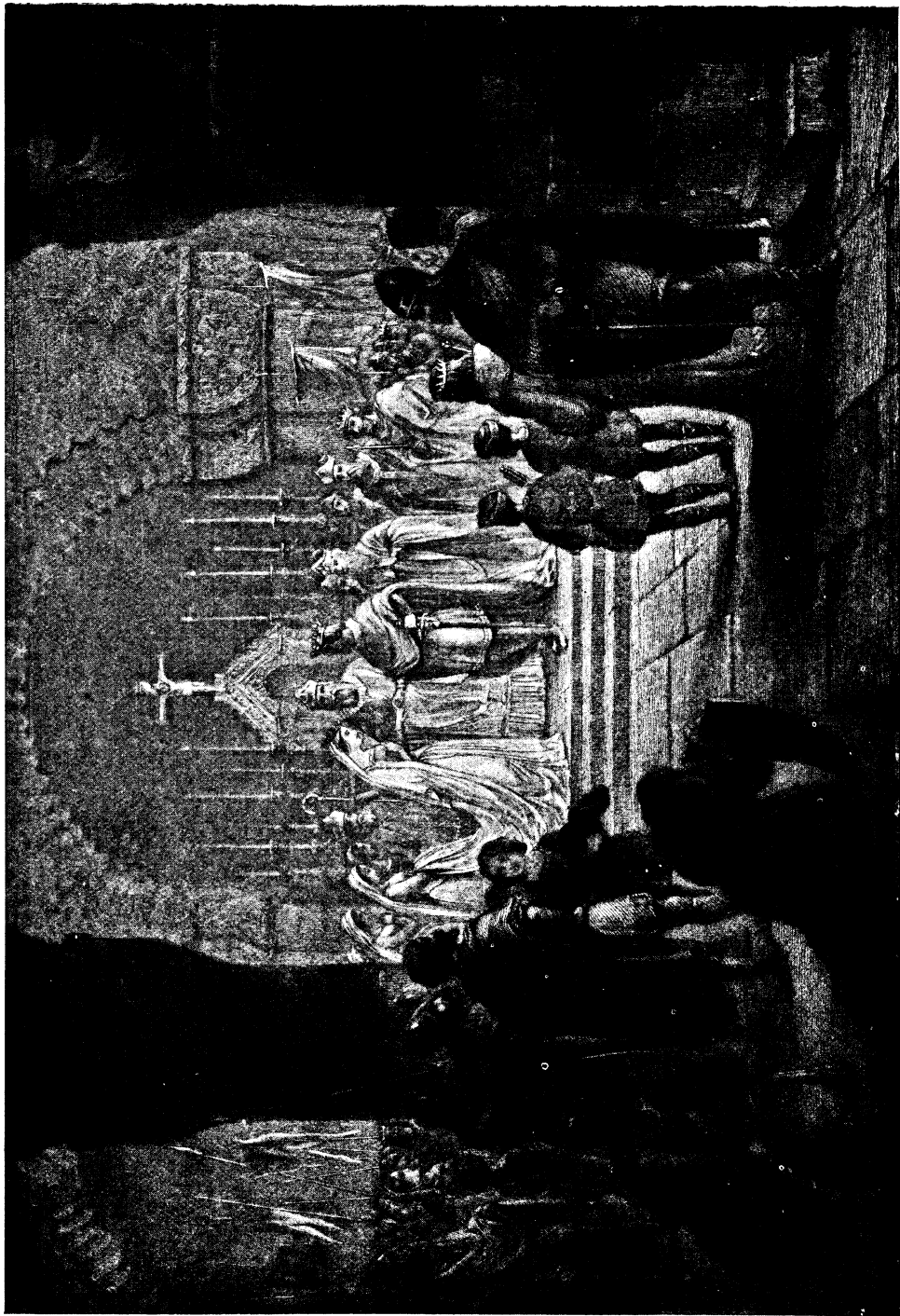
possessions fell to the king, part of them to be retained, part to be redistributed; but when, in the following year, Godwin and Sweyn returned from Flanders, to which country they had fled, and Harold crossed over from Ireland, the magnitude of their adherence, since all their people, deserting their new masters, rallied to the old standard, induced Edward, by *force majeure*, to consent to Godwin's purging himself, before the throne and the Great Council, of the crime of high treason, of which he and his had



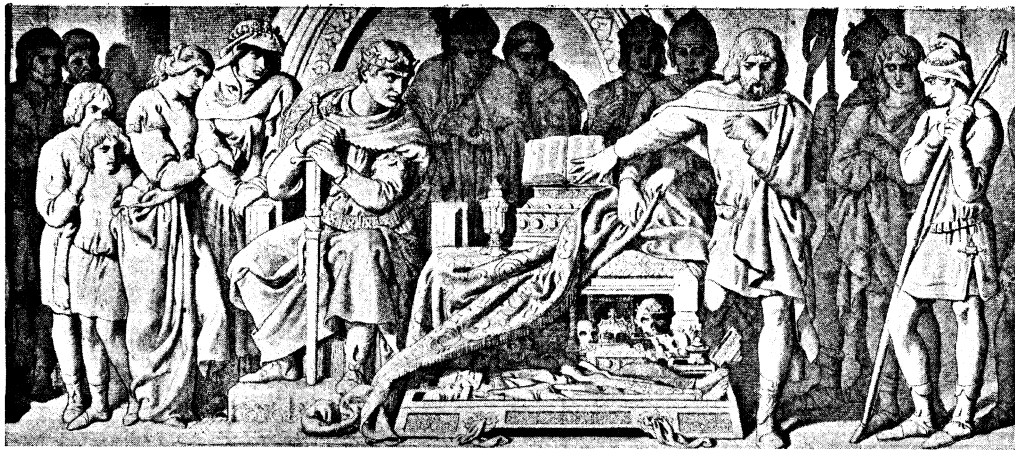
"A SORCERESS FORETELLING THE SUCCESS OF HAROLD HARFAGR, WHO DROVE THE ANCESTORS OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR FROM NORWAY."  
BY FREDERICK SANDYS.

been accused, and Godwin and his family regained their power.

In the following year, 1053, Earl Godwin died, and Harold succeeded to his father's estate, relinquishing, as a matter of policy, it



“THE MARRIAGE OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR TO MATILDA OF FLANDERS AT THE CHATEAU D’EU, 1050.” BY PERCIVAL SKELTON.



"HAROLD'S ALLEGED OATH OF FIDELITY TO WILLIAM, SWORN OVER THE CONCEALED RELICS OF THE SAINTS."  
BY DANIEL MACLISE, R.A.

is assumed, East Anglia to Leofric's son Algar. Harold, not only from his vast possessions, but from that personal magnetism which produces an effect of strength, recognisable even in history, forthwith became the most brilliant and conspicuous figure in that court of which the sombre shade of Edward the Confessor was but the nominal head.

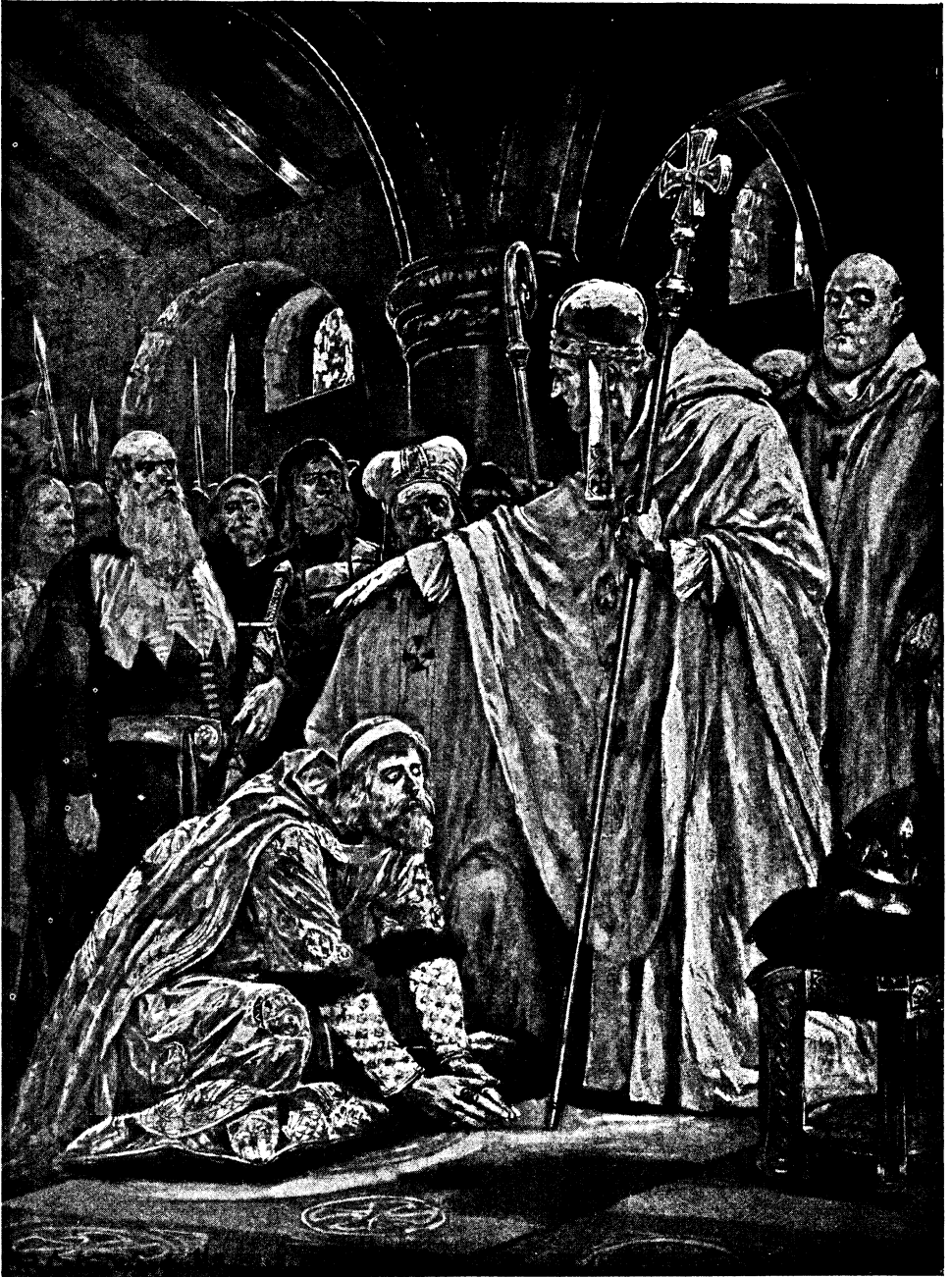
The first link in the chain of events which led to the Norman Conquest was forged when Ethelred married Emma, the sister of Normandy's then reigning duke; the second may be said to have been joined to it when, after Ethelred's death, Emma married Canute; whilst the third, and this a very strong one, was formed when Emma's children by Ethelred, Alfred and Edward, with their sister, Godgifu, exiled from the Court of England

by their stepfather, Canute, found refuge at the court of their Norman cousin, and were brought up under his care.

In the year 1028 Robert, surnamed "the Devil" by the people and "the Magnificent" by the nobles, placed the ducal crown of Normandy upon his own head after poisoning, at a banquet, his brother Richard and that duke's chief supporters. At this time Normandy's friendly relations with England ceased, less, it is to be feared, in consequence of the atrocious conduct which secured to Robert his duchy, than because he had recently put aside Estrith, the sister of Canute, whom he had married—a divorce which led, first, to a personal quarrel between Robert and Canute, and then to the former's attempted invasion of England on behalf



"HOMAGE RENDERED TO THE CONSECRATED BANNER UNDER WHICH ENGLAND WAS TO BE INVADED."  
BY DANIEL MACLISE, R.A.



"THE PROSTRATION OF HAROLD AT HIS CORONATION, 1066." BY R. CATON WOODVILLE.

of the banished princes, the sons of Ethelred and Emma.

The year 1027 or 1028 is marked as the period of William's birth, the son of Robert and Arlete, a peasant girl of Falaise, and 1035 brought his father's death and his own

succession to the duchy. Then ensued a long period of anarchy, during which the boy was being educated at the French Court.

In 1051 William visited England, staying at the Palace of Westminster as an honoured guest, and "aiding Edward by his advice." It





"THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS, OCTOBER 14, 1066." BY P. J. DE LOUTHERBOURG, R.A.

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"FINDING THE BODY OF HAROLD." BY W. HILTON, R.A.

*From the picture in the National Gallery of British Art.*

either made a new or renewed an old nomination in favour of William is a fable which is set aside by the witness of the contemporary English writers." He was buried the next day in Westminster Abbey, which he had lived just long enough to complete. "No sooner was the funeral of King Edward ended than Harold, on the same day, was elected and crowned king."

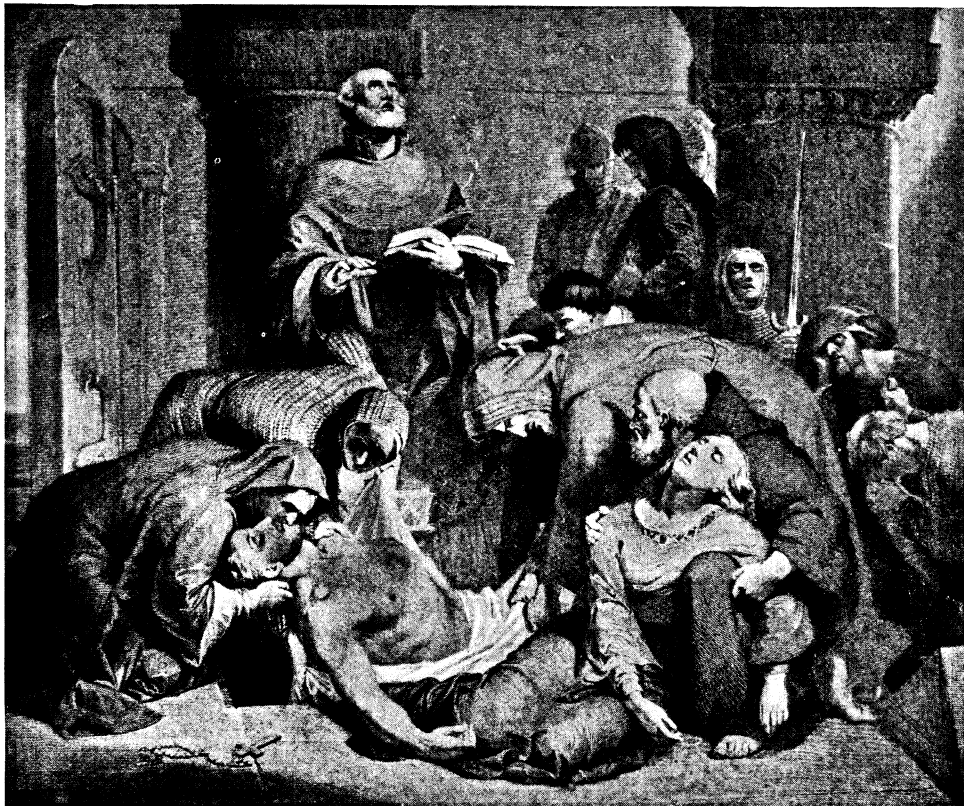
Harold's succession was not only lawful,

since the crown was an elective bestowal, not an hereditary right, but he was the people's choice, for, with the exception of Northumbria, the land was unanimous in its acclamation of him. The wise ruler of Northumbria, Siward, the giant-statured earl, famous for the part he had played against the Scottish usurper, Macbeth, having died in 1055, Tostig, Harold's brother, had been appointed in his stead ; but Tostig, by cruelty,

had so alienated the northern province by ten years' misrule that it revolted against him in 1065. Then the Northumbrians expelled Tostig and invited Morcar of Mercia, the son of Algar, who was the son of Leofric, Earl of Coventry, and brother, if we are to believe the traditions upon which Kingsley founded his famous romance, to Hereward the Wake, to assume Tostig's vacant seat of ruler. Harold, on his accession the next year, deeming it prudent to uphold Northumbria's choice of Morcar, made no attempt to reinstate his

the swan neck, "whose long and tender attachment to the king was looked upon with general approval by the people and accepted without complaint by the queen." Editha stands in the background of a tapestry across which Pity plies its shuttle and weaves the strands of the lives of Harold and Editha into one tragic pattern.

William was hunting in his park of Rouen, when a sergeant, just arrived from England, hastened into his presence to tell him of Edward's death and Harold's coronation.



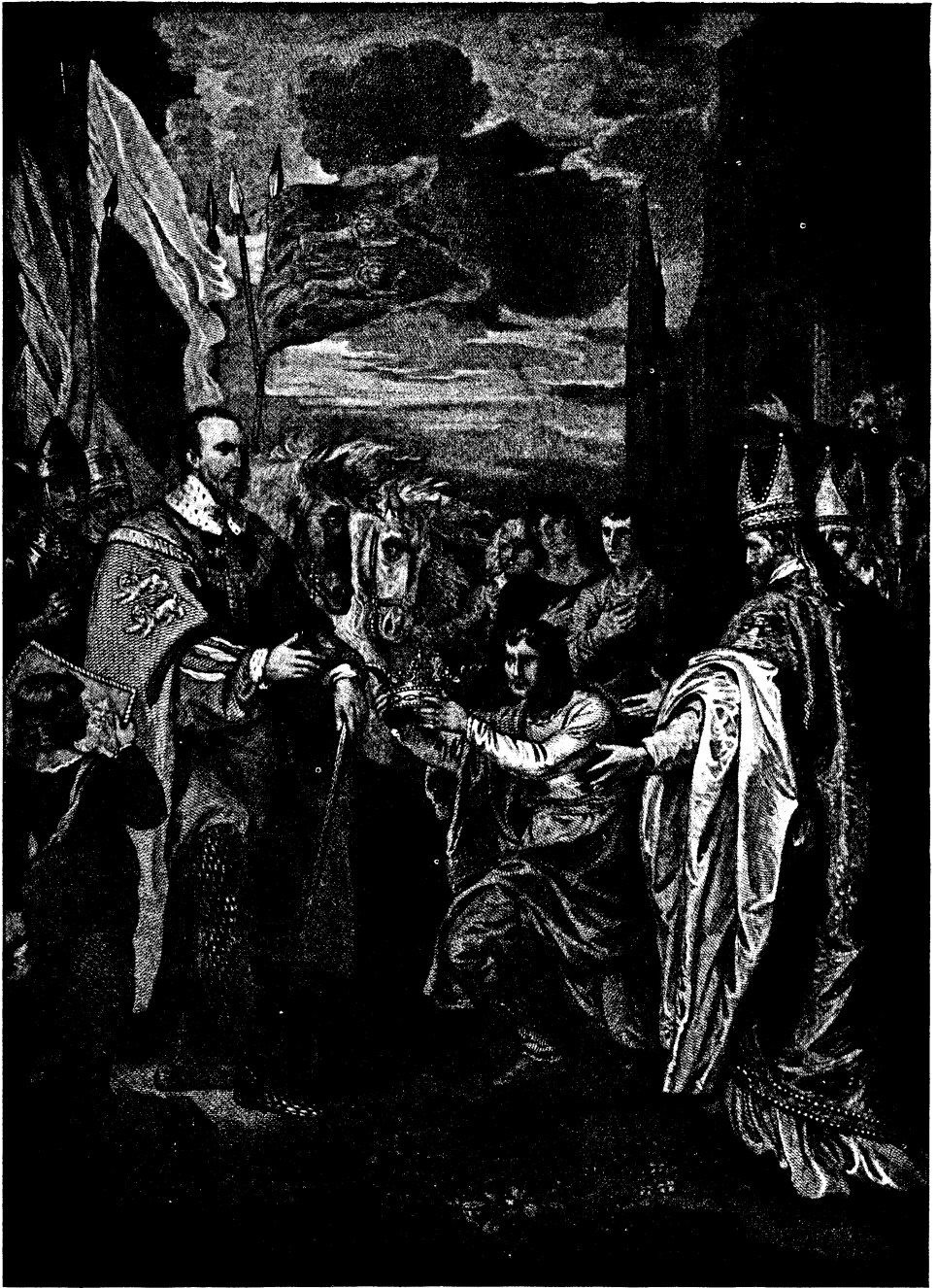
"THE BURIAL OF HAROLD." BY F. R. PICKERSGILL.

brother, and, indeed, sought to identify himself with Morcar's interests and the then representatives of that house of Leofric, which had hitherto been looked upon as his hereditary enemies, by marrying Aldgwyth, daughter of Algar and widow of the Welsh king, Gruffyd.

Here again we come into that haunted and misty region of romance with which history has, as a rule, but little profitable traffic, to be told that the real love of Harold's life was not this Aldgwyth, but Editha, of

He immediately sent a messenger to require Harold, his sworn liegeman, to surrender his inheritance, calling upon him to perform the terms of his oath. The words of the message are as ill-recorded as are the words of the oath, and Harold's reply of rejection appears to have animadverted discourteously on its sender's claims.

William immediately summoned a feudal parliament, and argued and reasoned with its members as to the advisability of their upholding his pretensions, but it was not

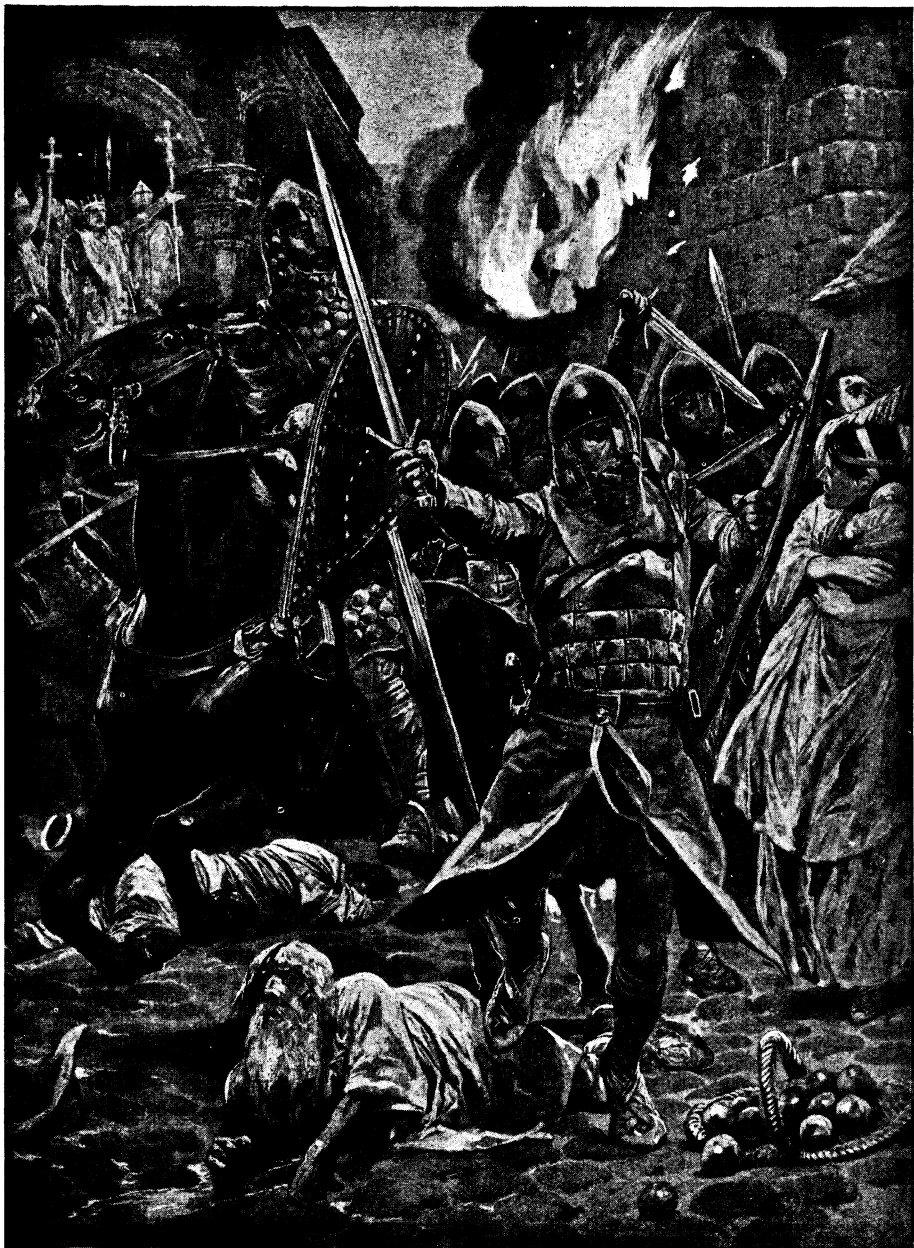


"WILLIAM I. RECEIVING THE CROWN OF ENGLAND." BY BENJAMIN WEST, R.A.

until he promised that the fertile fields of England should be the recompense of their fidelity that his barons consented to give him aid. Then, since stories of England's riches had filtered to the ears of the people, there

poured in a multitude from Poitou and Maine, from Flanders and Anjou, from Brittany and Burgundy, from Piedmont and the Rhine, a stream of knights ready for a conflict which was to bring such a vast





"THE MASSACRE OF SAXON CITIZENS BY THE NORMAN SOLDIERS DURING THE CORONATION CEREMONY OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR AT WESTMINSTER, CHRISTMAS DAY, 1066."

BY R. CATON WOODVILLE.

reward, and eager for an enterprise which Alexander, the Roman Pontiff, urged as a means of acquiring England as a fief for St. Peter. To that end the Pope especially blessed a banner to head the invasion.

By acknowledging the rule of the house of Leofric in Northumbria, Harold turned his

brother into an active foe. Harold numbered, therefore, at the beginning of his all too short reign, three dangerous opponents, his brother, Tostig, William, Duke of Normandy, and Harold Hardrada, King of Norway, and both the last were willing to side with the first in any action that would



"SCENE OF CONFUSION IN THE ABBEY, CAUSED BY THE RIOT OUTSIDE, AT THE CORONATION OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR, CHRISTMAS DAY, 1066." BY JOHN CROSS.

divide his power. Tostig, a man of talent and of thwarted ambition, was the first to aim a blow at his brother's rule. With ships that he got from William of Normandy, many supplies from Flanders, to which country he had fled on being exiled, a vast number of English adventurers, and the promise of co-operation from Norway, he started to harry his brother's recently acquired kingdom. Recognising that Tostig's

very numerous fleet and army was but the advance guard of the Norman invasion, Harold left London for Sandwich, where Tostig then was, levying contributions and plundering as he advanced. But Harold no sooner reached Sandwich than he had news of Tostig's depredations, this time on the Lincolnshire coast, whence he was driven by Morcar to Scotland, and thence ultimately made his way to Harold Hardrada, who,

appointing his son, Magnus, to govern Norway in his absence, lent to Tostig the enormous prowess and strength of which his nation was possessed, and with a fleet of some five hundred ships entered the Humber.

Harold, who had stationed his troops on the southern coast, fearful of incursions from Normandy, was forced, by news that the Northern invaders had taken York, to abandon his position and hasten towards that city. He met his brother and the Norwegian king in the engagement known as the battle of Stamford Bridge. Victory was decisive in favour of the English king, and Tostig, Harold Hardrada, and the flower of Norway there lost their lives.

Three days after this signal success, in which two out of his three enemies perished, Harold, still at York, received news of the landing of the Normans at a place called Bulverhithe, between Pevensey and Hastings. The news came to him, we are told, when he was "sitting 'jollily' at dinner . . . and in great haste he marches to London. Thence, not tarrying for supplies . . . and ere the third part of his army could be put in order, finds the Duke about nine miles from Hastings."

"William's army landed on the Sussex coast to the west of Pevensey Bay on September 28, quite without opposition. Two days later the entire force was moved on to Hastings, where the army was bivouacked probably along the heights north of the town. Such was the Norman position when, sixteen days after the landing, intelligence was received by William of the rapid approach of Harold from London," said the late Major-General E. Renouard James, R.E., in his interesting account of the battle of Hastings in

*The Royal Engineers Journal* for January, 1907.

Of the numbers which made up the army which accompanied William, there are various accounts. William of Poitou put it at 60,000; but Ramsay calls this 'a tenfold exaggeration,' and as Major-General Renouard James points out—and he goes carefully into the number of knights per ship, in addition to the esquires, men-at-arms, and horses, and the average carrying capacity of each horse-carrying ship, and that of each ship carrying

infantry—the force embarked could not have exceeded 3,600 cavalry and 7,400 infantry, total 11,000 men. A study of the ships delineated in the Bayeux Tapestry, the capacity of the average of which is not beyond the ordinary fishing-boat of the present day, reveals how the 700 less 4, which Wace states was the number which set sail for England, could not have carried more. Harold's force we may estimate at about similar strength.

Given a man of genius with opportunity, and he will shape events with a dexterity that simulates Fate. William showed his genius when, towards the afternoon of that long day of October 14, during which success had alternated from one side to the other, he conceived

the idea of feigning a retreat in order to tempt the English from their fastness. He had put the idea into execution and drawn them in pursuit once before, but this time he made his retreat in the direction of the Hastings road, "where," again to quote from Major-General James, "he knew the advantage of higher ground would soon be on his side; and at the critical moment (the feint having been successful), the French on the east fell on the disorderly crowd of pursuers on their



"WILLIAM TAKING PRISONER HIS BROTHER, BISHOP ODO, FOR ILLEGALLY AMASSING LARGE SUMS OF THE PUBLIC MONEY."

*From a drawing by Samuel Wale.*

flank, and effected immense slaughter. This manœuvre seems to have been repeated more than once, with the result that the English strength was so materially weakened that it became necessary to concentrate in defence of the standard." The attitude of Harold's troops, indeed, was then a purely defensive one, and to such a contest there could be but one issue. William ordered a charge on the central point marked by the standard. The shield palisade, built up by the interlocking of the six-foot-high English shields, was broken, the discipline of the troops gave way, the standard was beaten down, and Harold fell beside it, whilst the remnant of the force was driven bodily down the slight reverse slope on to the neck of the isthmus below.



MATILDA OF FLANDERS, WIFE OF  
WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

So perished the last of the Saxon kings—unfortunate.

William's conduct was a magnificent exhibition of valour. Three horses are said to have been killed under him, but with the defeat of Harold he showed another side of his character, and it is asserted that in the delirium of triumph his conduct, and that of his followers, was marked by atrocious cruelty. Even in this, however, there was revealed that curious fanaticism which in religion, as in liberty, permits so many crimes to be committed in its name. He marked out the spot on which Harold was slain, vowing that piece of ground should be dedicated to Heaven, and here it was that, later, Battle Abbey was raised.

War begets heroes, but it begets also mourners, and the tragic figure of Editha, distractedly seeking the body of her beloved Harold amongst the dead, is so pathetic a picture that it has stolen away our critical attitude towards her anomalous position, and caused her name to live as that of a heroine these many years after her death. There is a tradition

2 x



WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.  
*From an engraving by G. Vertue.*

which historians admit to be incredible, though romantic, that Harold was not killed at the battle of Hastings, and the Harleian MS. No. 3776 contains the curious legend that "although he was grievously wounded in this battle and to all appearance dead, yet when those lying in the field were examined by some women searching for their friends, it was discovered that life was still lingering in his body." It tells how he was secretly removed to Winchester and nursed back to health, but both internally and externally was an altered man; that although at first he sought the intervention of other nations in

bones the inscription, "*Hic jacet Harold infelix*," proved their words.

One ambition has been attributed to him which it is peculiarly interesting to note to-day, since, if the tradition is true, Harold ranks as our first English aviator. He was, Milton asserts, "in his youth strangely aspiring, had made and fitted wings to his hands and feet; with these on the top of a tower, spread out to gather air, he flew more than a furlong; but the wind being too high, came fluttering down, to the maiming of all his limbs; yet so conceited of his art, that he attributed the cause of his fall to the



"THE DEATH OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR." BY SIR JOHN GILBERT, R.A.

his behalf, he soon exchanged his spear for a pilgrim's staff, passed many years in penitential travels and austerities, wandered at last to Chester, and took possession of a hermitage of which its former possessor had just died, and here, until his death seven years later, in the reign of Henry I., led a religious hermit's life. Here it is said that Henry I. visited him, and under confession on his death-bed revealed the hermit's regal status. The monks of Waltham asserted, however, that the body of Harold, conveyed to them for burial by Editha and two of their Order, was buried in their abbey, and that over his

want of a tail, as birds have, which he forgot to make to his hinder parts. This story, though seeming otherwise too light in the midst of a sad narration, yet for the strangeness thereof, I thought worthy enough the placing."

William lingered in Hastings until he received reinforcements from Normandy, and on their arrival advanced towards London, either receiving the submission of the people of the district through which he passed or devastating the country. Dover, for he hugged the coast, capitulated so tamely that suspicion of disaffection



rests on its castle's commander. Here news reached William from London that Edgar Atheling, the son of Edward the Outlaw, had been proclaimed king, but not unanimously, perhaps because the young Atheling was incapable of governing, or because the weight of the Pope was on William's side, and the powerful Churchmen generally were French or Norman, or because the great Northumbrian lords, Morcar and Edwin, held themselves aloof from partisanship. London, however, was faithful to the Saxon line, and William, instead of marching on directly and making a triumphal entry into the capital, crossed the Thames at Wallingford, and set himself to the task of surrounding the city with his troops and starving it out.

His policy succeeded, and London was isolated, as Freeman says, "within a cordon of wasted land." To William, with the bishops and notables of the nation, came Edgar to make submission, and the Conqueror was crowned at Westminster on Christmas Day, 1066.

Although he was anointed king, not more than a third of the country had as yet surrendered to William's rule; but he set himself doggedly to win the rest by fire and sword, for while nothing could be milder than his rule over those who acknowledged his sovereignty, nothing could be more harsh than his treatment of those who held out against him. Early in the year 1067 he made a progress through the eastern and western parts of his new kingdom, razing homesteads, and building in their place fortresses, castles and towers, which he garrisoned with his countrymen. Of this tour, which, on the part of the king, was marked by destruction, vengeance, harshness, although

rarely by actual cruelty, and on the part of the people by resistance, subjection, and again futile resistance, pictorial art has left no record, but literary art has made an imperishable figure of "England's darling, Hereward the Wake," and it has treated with equal success the revolts of William's barons. But the real record of that time is to be found in Domesday Book, and the entries of the portions of the lands with the word "waste" against them are significant record of the king's triumphant progress. William of

Malmesbury, writing at the beginning of the twelfth century of the districts which lie between the Humber and the Tees and those between the Wear and the Tyne, says: "Thus the resources of a province, once flourishing, were cut off by fire, slaughter, and desolation."

William may be said to have subdued the west of England in 1068; to have put down the great uprising in the north, in which Edgar Atheling was supported by Svend, King of Denmark, in 1069; and the whole land was practically conquered in 1070. The last years of his life were not untroubled by revolt, for Hereward made his last stand in 1071, and we get uprisings at Durham as late as 1080; but the country was more or less at peace, for even

Scotland had admitted his overlordship in 1072, and the revolts by which his last years were troubled were first those of his own barons and later those of his unruly sons.

The end of William's happiness in his conquest must have been reached at its beginning—in his crowning at Westminster and the submission to him of a people whose land, according to Pictaviensis, "far surpassed France in abundance of precious metals," a land that in fertility was termed



"THE BODY OF WILLIAM REFUSED INTERMENT  
BY ANSELM FITZARTHUR."

*From a drawing by Samuel Wale.*



"the granary of Ceres," in riches "the treasury of Arabia." But numerous filaments of trouble immediately began to spin out from the web of success of which William was the centre. The first of these found its attachment in Normandy, when, leaving his conquered kingdom to the care of William Fitzosborne, one of the most brave and favoured of his Norman followers, and Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, his half-brother, he returned to his native country to quell the open rebellion of his son Robert, now grown into a man of twenty-three, whom he had left regent of his duchy as a boy of twelve. According to tradition, father and son were actually engaged in single combat, when William was attempting to retake the castle of Gerberoi, where the rebel and his followers had established themselves, and the vigour of the younger man nearly occasioned the elder's death.

This journey was William's first mistake, for his presence was necessary to the perfect subjugation of England. Insurrection was rife, in spite of the terms of the oath of allegiance—"Hear, my lord. I become your liegeman of life and limb and earthly worship, and faith and truth I will bear to you to live and die. So help me God"—and William, recalled from Normandy, resumed his place on the throne, resolved to crush by severity "a people he could not win by kindness."

Of the oppression that followed, the Saxon chronicler wrote: "He was stark beyond all bounds to those who withsaid his will . . . he had earls in his bond . . . he did not spare his own brother Odo . . . he ruled over England, and by his cunning he was so thoroughly acquainted with it, that there is not a hide of land of which he did not know both who had it and what was its worth. . . . Wales was under his weald . . . he subdued Scotland by his mickle strength . . . he wielded the Isle of Man withal . . . If he might have lived yet two years, he would have won Ireland . . . Truly in his time men had mickle suffering and very many hardships. . . . He was so very stark."

On the coinage, which was struck immediately after his coronation, we are shown a William who appears both older and younger than he actually was. At this time he was thirty-eight, for the battle of Hastings was fought on the anniversary of the day on which both he and Harold were born.

It was in the expression of face, for he had furrows of thought between the brows, that William looked old; and the look of youth was conferred by the black and glossy short hair, the clean-shaven, olive-hued face, and

the small mouth, beautiful in contour, although here the look of youth was qualified by the exceeding firmness with which the lips were set, and the jaw was that of "a tiger, a Caesar, a Cortez, or a Napoleon. He was a second Ulysses in strength, and he used a bow no other could bend."

We have, unfortunately, no picture other than words to bring before us that marvellous scene on Salisbury Plain, when, the compilation of Doomsday Book being made, William in 1086 summoned to meet him there all the landowners of England, for, says Freeman, "No act in English history is more important than this. . . . It established the principle that whatever duty a man might owe to an inferior lord, his duty to his sovereign-lord the king came first." And, says this same authority, "this one act of the wisdom of the Conqueror secured the unity of England for ever."

The assemblage of this great court at Salisbury was not only the most important, but it was the last act in England of William's reign, for in July of the next year, 1087, he crossed to France to dispute with the king of that country the possession of the city of Mantes. Here, at the sack of the city, which his soldiers had wantonly set on fire, his horse, having placed its foot on some burning ashes, plunged, and bruised him against the pommel of the saddle so severely that he was carried in a dying condition to Rouen, where he expired on September 9, 1087, in the sixtieth year of his age and the twenty-first of his sovereignty over England.

He was scarcely dead when the nobles who surrounded him left hastily for their castles, and the servants pillaged his valuables, carried off even the funeral clothes, and left his corpse on the floor. There a knight named Herluin found it deserted, and undertook the care of the funeral rites. The body was put into a coffin at his expense, and transported to Caen for burial in a church founded by William himself. While the funeral oration was being pronounced, and the body was about to be lowered into the grave, a Norman knight advanced and said: "This ground belongs to me. That man whose eulogy you are pronouncing robbed me of it. Here stood my ancestral home. This man seized it, contrary to all justice, and without paying the price of it. I forbid you to cover his body with earth that belongs to me." Thus the conqueror of a great kingdom obtained only through pity a grave upon his native soil, and those who performed his obsequies were compelled to put down the price of it on his coffin.

# THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL TREAT.

BY H. C. O'NEILL.



TIM'S father was a Salvationist and, as far as his guidance went, tried to train up his son in the way he should go; but his mother, while not consciously condemning religion, gave no outward sign of

any faith in it. Her interests in religion were purely commercial. As soon as the faintest report of an approaching Sunday-school treat reached her ears, she inquired where the church was, and subtly worked up the credibility of the report. Then on Saturday night, when her model spouse had given her the proceeds of his toil, she would sally forth with a shawl over her head, to return later with a small bundle, compactly pinned up in a piece of old linen.

The next day, Tim, cleansed and polished beyond recognition—at any rate, Tim had grave doubts as to the identity of himself at that moment with his normal weekday self—would emerge, with a shamefaced gleam in his eye, in the glory of an apparently brand-new suit of clothes, a white collar with a bow attached, boots and stockings, and even a cap.

At three o'clock he would be found imbibing religion, so far as a crisp discussion on current politics with his neighbours allowed. At times he so far forgot his new self as to disappear under forms, pinching sundry bare legs, and generally adding a vivid realisation to the scheme of torture upon which the instructor of youth sometimes dwelt.

Having thus for some weeks imbibed religious knowledge and contributed efficiently to the illumination of others, Tim would be presented with a red ticket, which informed the reader that it was a scholar's ticket for the Sunday-school treat, which would take place on such a day at such a place. Arrangements were discussed, and so the Sabbath day passed.

Tim's first treat was momentous. He was six, and the only other child from Pyle Street was Nan, who, as all the world knew, was

the belle of that street and of any others—if there were any. The day arrived, and at 11.45 a.m., Tim, in his Sunday self, left the parental roof with sundry instructions hurled after him from the doorstep. Farther up the street Nan waited, and Tim's heart, in all the joy of its everyday identity, beat high with pride and happiness. He was to be her cavalier to the wagonettes. After that the Fates had doubtless settled as they would. The present was enough.

Nan, too, was in holiday garb. Her small white frock was starched so that it stuck out all round, having much the same effect, as Tim reflected, as the palings round a monument. Off they trudged, recounting to each other the glorious deeds they were going to perform. By and by they reached the brakes, and being mounted in that which contained the youngest children, they drove off amid "hurrahs" from fond mothers and sisters and brothers.

After a slow trot for three-quarters of an hour, the lines of a white tent gleaming in the sun from a field about half a mile away announced to many pairs of eyes the promised land. Here the country had not yet wholly emancipated itself from the dominion of township, and a pathway of hard-trodden soil flanked the hedges which bounded the fields.

Several of the bigger boys and girls descended at this point to run a race towards the field. Some of the smaller generation, showing signs of incipient mutiny, had to be allowed to follow. Tim was among these, and he got off the last step of the wagonette with some show, if not much, of ease and grace; for it is sad to relate that, in spite of the maturity and vastness of his spirit, Tim's bodily cubits were limited, and when he had entered the wagonette, he had been forced to accept the leverage of some adult arms. He had treated them at the time much as one would banisters—as necessary material conveniences to mankind, which are naturally ignored.

Having reached the ground, Tim's small legs were soon beating out a quick tune on the hard path. He turned, in his running, to see if Nan was observing his high stepping and the mighty way he was vanquishing

space ; but, as luck would have it, there was a lamp-post at that spot, and in turning once more to the direction of the field, Tim's face came into smart contact with the post. His face grew crimson ; tears filled his eyes as shame took possession of his heart, for Nan *had* been looking and must have seen. Oh, ignominy beyond endurance ! But Tim recollected that he was a man, and to show that such trifling occurrences, if they *should* come to pass, were ignored by such as he, he put on an extra spurt. He had overtaken a teacher, who, seeing the red face, down which fast tears were coursing, and surveying the panting little figure, said kindly : " What's the matter, my little man ? Why are you crying ? "

" I'm not crying," was the reply, amid the tears. Of course he wasn't crying. The teacher could not have known that it was Tim.

Seeing his mistake, however, he took a different course. " Have you hurt yourself ? "

Tim glanced up to search the face of his questioner, and then answered : " I knocked my head against the lamp-post, but it's better now." Tim had come to rest, and surreptitiously brushed aside the appearance of tears. " I wasn't crying," he said again.

The teacher was a sportsman and a father, and with a look at the wistful little face, in which a strange child pride had struggled with and conquered the natural desire to cry, he said : " Now, look here. I'll give you a penny if you can race me to the field."

Tim glanced up. A contemptuous gleam lit his eye and chased the shadow from his face. April gave place to May. " All right," he said.

They were off, and Tim's small legs were again at work, this time spurred with the derision of the athlete, and carried him to the field a full two yards in front of his rival.

The latter held out the penny, which Tim patronisingly accepted. " You're not a bad runner," he said. The man nodded and smiled.

Here came Nan's wagonette, and Tim reflected that, if she had seen his humiliation, she must also have seen his victory. He awaited her arrival on the firm green sward, and then both scampered off to take toll of the field's treasures.

Before very long, races of various kinds were in progress, Tim distinguishing himself by winning a prize in one. He was so delighted to see that he had even made the fair Nan applaud, that he promised her his prize. The prizes were soon distributed, and then the great feature of the day began.

Then came tea ! Beside each cup and saucer there was a bag containing unlimited good things—an apple and an orange, three pieces of different kinds of cake, and some sweets. Tim gave himself up to the work of the moment with gusto, until several vain attempts to loose a belt round his waist, which wasn't there, yet nevertheless constrained him, persuaded him to keep what remained of his store.

One of the teachers, going to a farm close by for flowers, was escorted by Nan and her cavalier Tim. What an amazing thing it was, to be sure, this farm ! While the flowers were being cut, Nan and Tim strayed about, peeping into various nooks, until a rhythmical tinkling drew them to a cowshed. Here were rows of cows being milked, and the children stood agape at the unaccustomed sight. Quickly the time went past, and when it occurred to Nan to look for her teacher, the latter had gone.

In alarm she called Tim, then they both ran as fast as they could to the field of the treat. But no one was there. They had been left behind. The tears fell fast down Nan's cheeks, while her protector gulped uncomfortably at a lump in his throat. This, then, was the end of their day. They would undoubtedly be gobbled up by wild beasts, unless the giants ran away with them before that consummation.

Darkness was coming on, and slowly it came to Tim that, as the protector of the weak, he was called upon to act. The practical suggestion was soon made.

" Nan, let's run home." Easier said than done, Tim.

" I can't ! " she sobbed. " I don't know the way."

" I do," said Tim valiantly, if perhaps mendaciously. " It's along the lane," pointing to a road which led from the field. A little more persuasion, and then they set out, he with Nan's hand in his, whistling to show he wasn't afraid.

For some little space they ran, but it began to grow dark very quickly, and Nan's tears fell again.

" We're lost ! " she said, amid the sobs. " I want muvver ! " Even thus unsustaining is the love of man in the crises of life ! Both the children were tiring, and they slackened down to a walk.

What was that moving behind the hedge ? Oh ! and that terrible figure ? Even Tim's heart stopped beating for a moment, and then, without a word, with eyes almost closed, they ran with all their strength. The figure



"Races of various kinds were in progress."

behind made a low noise, which even in their fright they recognised as the mooing of a cow. Still, after dusk one is not prepared to receive calls even from cows.

A rumbling sounded in the distance. What was it now? The giants? A gleam shone over their heads from behind. It was a wagon. Tim pulled all his strength together. He would ask the way. The wagon drew nearer, and Tim's courage ebbed low. But, no. Now, all together. The driver heard a small voice shout: "Hey, mister, we're lost!"

He pulled up, and peering into the gloom, spied the two children, a little bedraggled, but still glorious in their Sunday clothes. A few questions elicited the whole story, and the man got down and carefully lifted them into the wagon behind upon some sacks. Then, being bound for Newborough, he whipped up his horses and started for home. Two small bodies gave a great sigh of relief, and in a minute both were fast asleep, Nan leaning on Tim's breast. Tim's last thoughts, as he felt the flaxen curls on his face, were that Heaven must be like this.

The rest of the children had long returned, and yet Pyle Street awaited the home-coming of its representatives. When it was quite dark, Nan's mother went round to the church which was the place for assembly, but nearly everyone had dispersed. A neighbour gazing out into the night, however, informed her that the children had all returned.

Anxiety now ruled unrestrained. The distracted mother ran back to Tim's mother to concert measures for the recovery of their children. But while they were still discussing it, the carrier's van drove slowly down the street and stopped at Tim's house. A knock came, and Tim's mother, opening the door, was called to the wagon, where the carter threw the light of a lamp on the two sleeping children. They were quietly taken out, Tim's mother, who a moment ago was almost distracted with anxiety, now being in a blazing temper. Nan was carried up the street. Both children were at once put to bed. Neither woke. Tim and Nan still nestled side by side in the vast, cool halls of sleep.



"The carter threw the light of a lamp on the two sleeping children."

# THE ANTLERS OF THE CARIBOU.

By CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS,

*Author of "Kings in Exile," "The Backwoodsmen," "The House in the Water," etc.*

When the frost is on the barrens,  
And the popple-leaves are thinned,  
And the caribou are drifting  
Down the wind . . . .



O writes one who knows all about how autumn comes to the Tobique barrens, and who claims to know as much as most men about the caribou. But the caribou do not always drift, by any means. They are rather an incalculable folk, these caribou—and even in their name one notes their inclination to be contrary; for the herds which frequent the high, watery barrens of northern New Brunswick are not, as one might suppose, the “caribou of the barren grounds,” but the larger and warier “woodland caribou.” The faithful observer of the manners and customs of this tribe may spend much time one year in learning what he will be constrained to unlearn with humility the next.

The lonely lake, smooth as a mirror between its flat, desolate shores, spread pink, amber, and gold toward the cloudless pink and orange sky, where the sun had just sunk below the wooded horizon. All the way up the lake, on one side, the shore was an unbroken stretch of treeless barren. On the other side the low, dark, serried ranks of the fir forest advanced almost to the water's edge, their tops like embattled spear-points against the coloured sky. From this shore a spit of sand jutted straight out into the lake. On its extremity, his magnificent bulk and lofty head black against the pellucid orange glow, stood a giant bull-moose, motionless as if modelled in bronze. His huge muzzle was thrust straight out before him, as if he was about to roar a challenge. His wide, palmated antlers were laid back over his shoulders.

Far down the lake a solitary huntsman lay beside a dying camp-fire, and gazed at the splendid silhouette. A faint puff of the

aromatic wood-smoke, breathing across his nostrils at that moment, bit the picture into his memory so ineffaceably, that never after could he sniff the smell of wood-smoke on evening air without the desolate splendour of that spacious and shining scene leaping into his brain. But he was a hunter, and the great bull was his quarry. Where he lay he was invisible against the dark background of tree and brush. Presently he reached for his rifle and for a trumpet-like roll of birch bark which lay close by. Noiselessly as a snake he crawled to the shelter of a thicket of young firs. Then he arose to his feet and slipped into the forest.

At the same instant the moose, as if some warning of his unseen foe had been flashed into his consciousness, turned and strode off, without a sound, into the woods.

Soon the tiny camp-fire had died to a few white ashes, and the half-dark of a cloudless night had fallen—still, and chill, and faintly sweet with damp, tonic scents of spruce, bay-berry, and bracken. There was that in the air which spoke of frost before morning. It wanted nearly an hour of moonrise. The wide, vague world of the night, that seemed so empty, so unstimulating, grew populous with unseen, furtive life—life hunting and hunted; loving, fearing, trembling; enjoying or avenging. But there was no sound, except now and then the inexplicable rustle of a dead leaf, or an elvish gurgle of water from somewhere in the shadows along shore.

At last the hunter, threading his way through the forest as noiselessly as the craftiest of the prowling kindreds, arrived in the heart of a covert of young fir-trees, from beneath whose sweeping branches he could command a near and clear view of the sandspit. Disappointed he was, but not surprised, to find that the great moose-bull had disappeared. Seating himself with his back to a small tree, his rifle and the birch-bark trumpet—or “moose-call”—across his knees, he settled down to wait—to wait with



that exhaustless patience, that alert yet immobile vigilance which are, perhaps, hardest to acquire of all the essentials of woodcraft. In the stillness the wood-mice came out and resumed their play, with fairy-thin squeaks and almost inaudible patterings and rustlings over the dry carpet of the fir needles.

At last, above the flat, black horizon beyond the lower end of the lake, came the first pale glow of moonrise. At sight of it the hunter lifted the birch-bark horn to his lips and breathed through it a deep, bleating call, grotesque and wild, yet carrying an indescribable appeal, as if it were the voice of all the longing of the wilderness. Twice he sounded the uncouth call. Then he waited, listening, thrilled with exquisite expectancy.

He knew that, when one called a moose, one never knew what might come. It might, of course, be the expected bull, his lofty, antlered head thrusting out over the dark screen of the bushes, while his burning eyes stared about in search of the mate to whose longing call he had hastened. In that case he might perhaps feel vaguely that he had been deceived, and fall back soundlessly into the darkness; or, taking it into his head that another bull had forestalled him, he might burst out into the open, shaking his antlers, thrashing the bushes, and roaring savage challenge. But, on the other hand, it might not be a bull at all that would come to the lying summons. It might be an ungainly moose-cow, mad with jealousy and frantically resolved to trample her rival beneath her knife-edged hoofs. Or it might be something dangerously different. It might be a bear, a powerful old male, who had learned to spring upon a cow-moose and break her neck with one stroke of his armed paw. In such a contingency there was apt to be excitement; for when a bear undertakes to stalk a cow-moose, he gives no notice of his intentions. The first warning, then, of his approach, would be his final savage rush upon the utterer of the lying call. For such a contingency the hunter held his rifle always ready.

But, on the other hand, there might well be nothing at all—no answer, all through the long, cold, moon-silvered night, summon the birch horn never so craftily.

And this was what the hunter thought had been so far the result of his calling. Had he chanced to look over his shoulder, he might have known better. He might have seen the shadows take substance, condensing into a gigantic and solid bulk just behind the little tree against which he

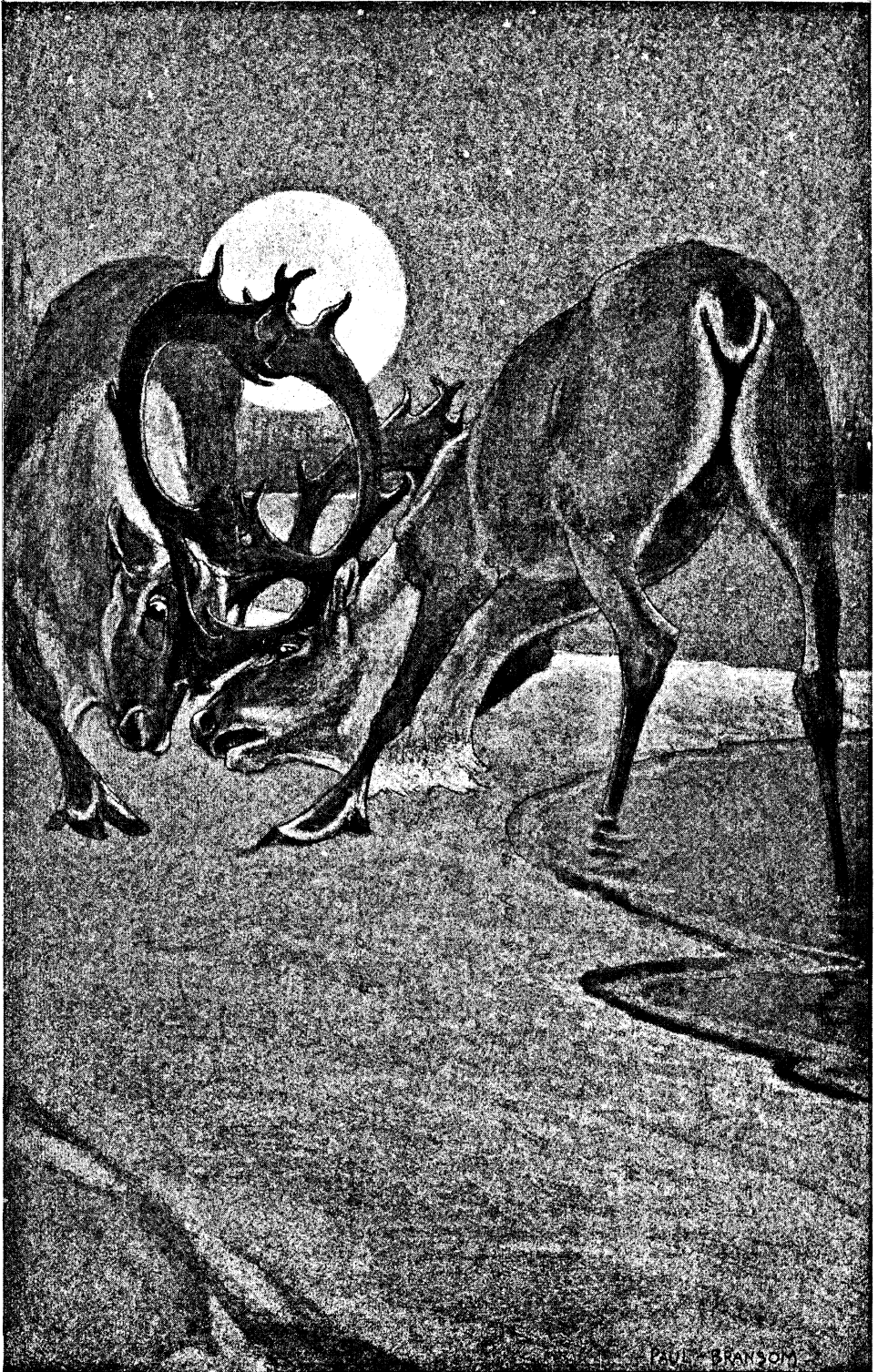
leaned his back. He might have seen the spread of vast and shadowy antlers, the long, sullen head and drooping muzzle, the little eyes, in which, as they detected him in his ambush, a sudden flame of rage was quenched by the timely wisdom of fear. But the giant shape dissolved back into shadow, and the hunter never knew that he himself had been stalked and considered.

After a long silence, the birch-bark horn again sent forth its appeal. Loud and long it called; then it murmured a series of caressingly desirous notes, impatient and importunate. When it stopped, from the thick dark just below the sandspit came a light snapping of twigs and brushing of branches, which seemed to be moving toward the open point. The hunter was puzzled; for a moose-bull, coming in answer to the call, would either come with a defiant rush, and make a much louder noise, or he would come secretively and make no noise whatever. With pounding pulses he leaned forward to see what would emerge upon the sandspit.

To his surprise, it was no moose, but a small grey caribou cow, looking almost white in the level rays of the now half-risen moon. She was followed by another cow, larger and darker than the first, and then by a fine caribou bull. Softly, alluringly, the hunter sounded his call again, but not one of the caribou paid any attention to it whatever. To the bull of the caribou it mattered not what lovelorn cow-moose should voice her hoarse appeals to the moon. He and his followers were on their own affairs intent.

He was a noble specimen of his kind, as to stature, with a very light greyish head, neck, and shoulders, showing white in contrast to the dull brown of the rest of his coat. But his antlers, though large, were unevenly developed, so obviously imperfect that the hunter, who wanted heads, not hides or meat, hesitated to shoot. He chose rather to bide his time, and hope for a more perfect specimen, the law of New Brunswick allowing him only one.

For several minutes the bull stood staring across the lake, as though half minded to swim it, and his two cows—antlered, like himself, though much less imposingly—watched him with dutiful attention. Whatever his purpose, however, it was never declared; for suddenly there came a new and more impetuous crashing among the undergrowth, and the eyes of the little herd turned to see what was approaching. An instant later a second bull, about the size of



"The fight hung exactly in the balance."

the first, but very much darker in colouring, broke furiously through the bushes. He rushed about halfway down the sandspit, then stopped, snorting and blowing defiance.

The new-comer had a magnificent set of antlers, but the hunter forgot to shoot.

The white bull, surprised by the unexpected challenge, stood for an instant staring stupidly, waving his great ears. Then all at once the hot blood of arrogant possession and jealous mastery seemed to rush to his head. Thrusting aside the two cows, that stood huddled in his path, with a furious booming grunt he lurched forward to meet the challenger.

With lowered heads, noses between their knees, and the branching spikes of their antlers presented straight to the front, they came together with a shock and a snort. The hard horn clashed with the dry resonance of seasoned wood. Being of about equal size, both withstood the shock. Both staggered; but, recovering themselves instantly, they stood pushing with all the strength of their straining, heaving bodies, their hoofs digging deep into the sand.

Then, on a sudden, as if the same idea had at the same instant flashed into both their seething brains, they disengaged and jumped backwards, like wary fencers.

For several tense seconds they stood eyeing each other, antlers down, while the big-eyed cows, with ears slowly waving, looked on placidly, and the moon, now full risen, flooded the whole scene with lavish radiance. The only concern of the cows was that the best bull should win, with proved mastery compelling their allegiance.

Suddenly the new-comer, the dark bull, as if to get around his adversary's guard, feinted to the right and then lunged straight forward. But the white bull was too experienced to be caught by such a well-worn ruse. He met the attack fairly. Again the antlers clashed. Again those monstrous pantings and savage gruntings arose on the stillness, as the matched antagonists heaved and pushed, their hind legs straddled awkwardly and their hoofs ploughing the sand.

At length the white bull put one of his hind feet in a hole. Giving way for a second, he was forced backwards almost to the water's edge. With a furious effort, however, he recovered himself, and even, by some special good fortune or momentary slackness of his adversary, regained his lost ground. Both paused for breath. The fight hung exactly in the balance.

To judge from his antlers, the white bull

was the older and therefore, one may suppose, the craftier duellist. It occurred to him now, perhaps, that against a foe so nearly his equal in strength he must seek some advantage in strategy. He made a sudden movement to disengage his antlers and jump aside. To the trained eyes of the hunter, watching from the thicket, the intention was obvious. But it failed curiously. At the very instant of the effort to disengage, the dark bull had surged forward with violence. Not meeting the resistance expected, he was taken by surprise and stumbled to his knees. The white bull, quick to feel his advantage, instantly changed his purpose and surged forward with all his force. For a moment the dark bull seemed to crumple up as his rival's heaving shoulders towered above him.

Now, this was the white bull's chance. It was for him to roll his enemy over, disengage, rip the dark bull's unfortunate flank, and tread him down into the sand. But he did nothing of the sort. He himself staggered forward with the fall of his adversary. Then he drew back again, but slowly. With the motion his adversary regained his feet. Once more the two stood, armed front to front, grunting, straining, sweating, heaving, but neither giving ground an inch.

"Locked!" said the hunter, under his breath.

That, indeed, was the fact. The two pairs of antlers were interlaced. But the sinister truth was not yet realised by the combatants themselves, because, when either tried to back free, so as to renew the attack more advantageously, it seemed to him quite natural that the other should furiously follow him up: In the confused struggle that now followed, they more than once pivoted completely around; and the two cows, perceiving something unusual in the combat, drew off with a disapproving air to the extremity of the sandspit. Little by little the white bull appeared to be getting a shade the better of the duel; for at length, regaining his first position, he began forcing his rival steadily, though slowly, back towards the woods. Then all at once, during a pause for breath, both at the same moment awoke to knowledge of the plight they had got themselves into. Both had sought to back away at the same instant. In the next they were tugging frantically to break apart.

But struggle as they might, their efforts were utterly in vain. The tough, strong

horn of their new antlers was ever so slightly elastic. It had yielded, under the impact of their last charge, just far enough for a perfect locking. But in the opposite direction there was no yielding. They were inextricably fixed together, and in a horrid attitude, in which it was impossible even to straighten up their bowed necks.

In the agonised pulling match which now began, the white bull had the best of it. He had slightly the advantage in weight. Little by little he dragged his grunting rival out along the sandspit, till the two cows, almost crowded off, bounced past with indignant snorts and vanished down the shore. A moment more, and he had backed off the sand into a couple of feet of water.

The shock of the plunge seemed to startle the white bull into new rage. He laid the blame of it upon his foe. As if with all his strength renewed, he recovered himself, and thrust the dark bull backward with such tempestuous force that the latter had all he could do to keep his footing. Presently he felt himself at the edge of the woods, his hind feet in a tangle of bushes instead of on the sand. Then, exhausted and cowed, his legs gave way, and he sank back upon his haunches. Frantic with despair, he struggled to butt and strike with his fettered prongs, and in this futile struggle he fell over on his side. The white bull, his paroxysm of new vigour come suddenly to an end, was dragged down with him, and the two lay with heaving flanks, panting noisily.

The hunter had laid down his roll of birch bark. He was just about to step forth from his ambush and mercifully end the matter with his knife. But there came a brusque intervention. He had not been the only spectator of the strange combat.

Out from the thickets at the lower edge of the point came plunging an enormous black bear. With one huge paw uplifted, he fell upon the exhausted duellists. One blow smashed the neck of the white bull. Turning to the other, who glared up at him with rolling, hopeless eyes, he fell to biting at him with slow, luxurious cruelty.

In that instant the hunter's rifle blazed from the thicket. The bear, shot through the spine with an explosive bullet, dropped in a sprawling heap across the bent forelegs of his victim. Stepping into the moonlight, the hunter drew his knife with precision across the throat of the wounded bull.

Straightening himself up, he stared for a few moments at the three great lifeless carcasses on the sand. Then he let his glance sweep out over the glassy waters and level, desolate shores. How strange was the sudden silence, the still white peace of the moonlight, after all that madness and tumult and rage which had just been so abruptly stilled! A curious revulsion of feeling all at once blotted out his triumph, and there came over him a sense of repugnance to the bulk of so much death. Stepping around it, he sat down with his back to it all, on a stranded log, and proceeded to fill his pipe.

## SILENCE.

**T**HE gracious gift of silver speech Life brings,  
 Death comes with golden silence close beside;  
 Silence, who broods with golden, throbbing wings,  
 Where angels stand before Heaven's gateway wide.

Speech is the silver trumpet of the mind,  
 Silence the golden mist that veils the soul;  
 Speech is the call to war, the wintry wind,  
 Silence the snow-clad peak, the planet's roll.

Speech is the pricking spur to deadening sloth,  
 Silence the balm for labour's noble scars;  
 Speech is the silver seal of earthly troth,  
 Silence the golden chain that guards Heaven's bars.

Speech is the silver link that binds mankind,  
 Silence the wingèd prayer, the perfect praise;  
 Speech is the silver key earth's gifts to find,  
 Silence goes with us to the starry ways.

DRUSILLA MARY CHILD.

# IN TIME OF WAR.

BY NORMAN INNES,

*Author of "Parson Croft," "My Lady's Kiss," "The Lonely Guard," etc.*



ASTON DUPREZ was the victim of circumstances; shortness of sight, mental as well as physical, and the severity of the Prussian military code being factors in his undoing.

Bitter was his repentance, frankly he owned the madness of acting upon the impulse of a moment, and yet it was a man's part he had played—the part of a loyal son of France.

Had his services been requisitioned, it would have been a different matter. As it was, he should have stayed at home, mixed the physic for his patients, and then started forth upon his afternoon round of visits, oblivious of the fact that men were fighting within sight of his home. Yet there were few in France—and he thanked Heaven for it—but would have acted as he, beneath the spell of the troops that had marched into Beaumont, confident of defending the passage of the Meuse against all comers. It was but a single corps, scarcely eight thousand, that bivouacked that evening along the river, but the Doctor's heart had glowed, as, bronzed and rugged, they had gone swinging down the lane past his villa—cavalry, infantry, and cannon. The dark eyes behind the gold-rimmed spectacles had kindled, and the frail figure had stiffened to the tramp of those dusty battalions, to the ring of bit and scabbard, and in his enthusiasm he would have drawn the bed on which his young wife was lying nearer to the window, that she might have a glimpse of their defenders. But Marguerite Duprez had little love for a soldier's calling.

"No, I would rather not," she had protested with a sigh, and her clasp tightened upon her husband's hand. "I could never have married a soldier, Gaston. Oh, but I am glad that in these dreadful days I have you at my side."

The man had frowned, though returning

the pressure upon his fingers, for his grand-sire had fought at Austerlitz, at Jena, at Leipzig, and the Doctor's heart was throbbing to the roll of the distant drums.

Late that evening he had gone down to the village, at the *auberge* had met some officers of the regiment quartered in Beaumont, and, fired by their talk, had offered his services to a member of General de Failly's staff. The surgeon to whom he had applied—a veteran who had served before Sebastopol, in Africa and Italy—had guessed the man's case, and, while hinting that he might be better and more profitably employed in ministering to the needs of his patients, had tentatively accepted his assistance with the remark that there was likely to be hot work in the neighbourhood within the next few days.

Late the following afternoon, when busy with his roses beneath the window of his wife's bedroom, a few desultory rifle shots, followed by the call of bugles, had startled Duprez. He listened. The village beneath him was astir; in the meadows beside the river he caught sight of some squadrons of cavalry in motion, and then the distant cries were swallowed in the roll of a well-sustained fire. Gaston Duprez hurried into the house, kissed his wife, to whom he had told nothing of what had passed at the inn overnight, and, soothing her anxiety with such evasive answers as the spur of the moment suggested, thrust his case of instruments and some rolls of lint into his pockets, and set out for the hamlet.

A quarter of an hour's walk brought him to Beaumont, where he found things in a pretty state, owing to the unexpected appearance of the enemy in force. The guns, with their escort of cavalry, were already upon the move in the direction of Buzancy, while a single regiment of infantry still held the village for the purpose of covering the withdrawal. It was hot work, indeed, but not of the sort that Duprez had looked for. Everything was in wildest confusion. Orderly officers were at their wits' ends, ammunition and baggage wagons choked the street, while



“It was with a thrill of satisfaction that he saw the Prussian drop.”

from the outlying buildings to the south-east a random fire was being maintained against the advancing Prussians, who had succeeded in winning a footing in the hamlet just as the Doctor reached the market-place.

In vain he scanned each face in the broken throng that passed him, in the hope of setting eyes on his friend the surgeon; but men, he knew, lay wounded, dying, in the direction of the river, and skirting a

barricade of wagons which was being erected at the further end of the square, he appealed to a staff officer for instructions.

“To your house!” cried the latter, with a wave of his arm, as he galloped by him. “You will come to no good over there.”

The head of the street was wreathed in a pall of greyish smoke, from which at that moment there emerged a score of hurrying figures. Duprez watched them dumbly; they



were Frenchmen, and flying. Then flames broke through the smoke, to be answered by a volley upon his left; he heard a woman's shriek, and, with a strange singing in the air above him, joined the others who were making their way back to the "place."

Here, beneath the shelter of the barricades, the regiment reformed instinctively, in broken order, in knots of ten or a dozen. In one of these, close beside the fountain in the middle of the square, Duprez found himself, and was greeted by an officer, a mere boy of a lieutenant.

"What brings you here with us?" he demanded irritably.

Duprez would have explained at length, but the other cut him short with a laugh.

"A doctor? Here's work for you, then!" cried he, and drew back his sleeve, revealing a gash from an ill-turned bayonet, red and ragged, from wrist to elbow. Duprez bathed the wound with water from the basin of the fountain and bound it up, while his patient, making light of his hurt as of the day's business, thanked him for his good offices.

"Monsieur should have been one of us—a soldier," said he, as Duprez made fast the bandage. The Doctor's face glowed with pride, for the moment speech failed him, and he was stammering his appreciation of the compliment, when a sudden spasm convulsed the boy's features and froze the words on the other's lips. For an instant the officer clutched at the stonework of the fountain, for an instant he stared at Duprez, and, with a sob that was half a sigh, fell forward upon the curb.

At that same moment the lust of battle first woke in the Doctor. They had killed a Frenchman, a mere boy, these Prussians, and thought of all else slipped from him—of his wife lying ill in the house which showed white upon the wooded slope at his back, of the fact that he was a civilian. Dropping to his knee, as a second bullet splintered a chip from the fountain, he snatched up a rifle that lay at his feet, readjusted his spectacles, took careful aim at a blue-coated figure in the act of crawling from beneath the barricade, and the huddled form above which he had fired was avenged. It was with a thrill of satisfaction that he saw the Prussian drop. A cartridge-box lay open beside him, and he reloaded quickly. His blood was aflame, the bullets were singing about him, to right and left in the evening sunlight soldiers of France were falling; but yonder was the foe creeping ever nearer, yet loath to leave such cover as doorways and the overturned wagons

afforded. Once only he paused to laugh and wipe his glasses as a plump Prussian officer who had mounted the barricade toppled forward with an odd contortion of his body.

A confusion of cries and the call of a bugle marked the end of the struggle, as a solid mass of the enemy broke into the "place"; the defenders had done their utmost, but the village was no longer tenable. Again the bugles rang out.

"Come," cried a soldier who had been firing shot for shot with Duprez, "now's the time to make a run for it."

There was little time to lose, for already the Prussians were advancing in open order.

The Doctor blundered to his feet, and in the excitement of the moment, his spectacles slipped to the ground, to be crushed the next instant beneath his companion's heel. Conscience of the weight of this final disaster, Duprez blinked helplessly about him. He was all but blind; everything was dim and indistinct—the glow of the evening sky, the whitewashed, shuttered houses, and the outstretched figures that dotted the square. Over one of these he tripped as he fled—the wounded man cursed him in Parisian *argot*—but, recovering himself, he held on, *chassepot* in hand, dashed down a narrow lane, and the next moment was struggling in the grip of half-a-dozen of the enemy.

"A civilian captured under arms, Herr Major."

Gaston Duprez stood in the village school-room between two soldiers, his arms pinioned behind him. Before him sat Major Friedrich von Kalmann, in temporary command of the Sixty-ninth Regiment; at his side stood a corporal, his accuser. A lamp had been lighted, for it was growing dusk, but to the Doctor all was a medley of shifting shadows. The cords cut into his wrists and elbows, he was doomed, and he knew it, but for the time being it was the loss of his glasses rather than the pain of his bonds or the prospect of death, swift and sudden, in face of a Prussian firing-party, that troubled him. He longed for a clearer sight of his captors, of the shadowy judge, on whose helmet and shoulder-straps the lamplight glinted. He felt that the officer was taking stock of him, and yearned to meet his gaze to learn what manner of man it was by whom he would be condemned.

"Have you anything to advance in your defence?"

The man spoke excellent French, without a suspicion of an accent, and Duprez guessed

that he had been born within fifty miles of the frontier.

The Doctor shrugged his shoulders.

"Nothing," he answered doggedly, knowing that Prussian shrift for a civilian caught red-handed under arms was of the shortest, but added, as if in extenuation of his offence: "I am a Frenchman."

Major von Kalmann shaded his eyes from the light and bent above the notebook that lay open upon the table before him. To all appearance, he was occupied in recording the prisoner's answers; in reality he was lost in thought. He had reason to be satisfied with the day's work. His regiment had played a brilliant part in the surprise of the French division, his commanding officer had already complimented him upon the successful capture of the village, but Friedrich von Kalmann felt little satisfaction. He shared in the general disgust that the Sixty-ninth Regiment, of all others, should have been detached from the main army to co-operate with the Saxons. As for Beaumont, he hated the very name of the place. He had been in an ill-humour the day through, and now, confronted by this civilian who had forfeited his life, his temper was at its worst, if the set of his face were any indication of his feelings.

"Ammunition was found upon the prisoner, Herr Major," observed the corporal, "with bandages and a case of surgical instruments."

"Your name?" demanded Von Kalmann, without looking up.

"Duprez," answered the other, staring at his questioner in an effort to focus his eyes. Any attempt at concealing his identity he recognised as useless, since his captors could learn his name from the first villager they laid hands on.

"Profession or trade?" The speaker had dropped his pen and stooped to recover it.

"Doctor."

"Of Beaumont?"

"Yes."

"Married?" The Prussian cleared his throat; his voice had sunk rather low, doubtless from the fatigue of the day.

Duprez nodded. The shoulders which had been squared defiantly drooped on a sudden, and the dim eyes grew dimmer as he thought of the sick wife waiting his return in the home he would never see again.

The Prussian was busy with his notebook, his clean-shaven features all in shadow.

"You have been taken in possession of arms," said he at last, thrusting at the

table-top with the point of his pen. "I understand that you make no denial?"

The Doctor was silent. Had he spoken, he felt he must have cursed these Prussians to their faces, illogically, for the blame was his own.

"Then, acting on my instructions, in accordance with the rules of warfare, you will be shot." The man spoke deliberately, but with bowed head and obvious embarrassment, to add, in a voice that scarcely rose above a whisper: "At sunrise to-morrow."

Thereupon the prisoner's wits began to work. Sentence had been passed and would assuredly be put into effect, but there was still nearly twelve hours' grace in which to take thought of the lonely future of the wife he should leave behind him.

"But," he stammered in German—Duprez spoke the language of the invader as he did his own—"but there is my wife, sir; I must see her."

He had taken a step towards the Prussian, but was instantly checked by his guards. Von Kalmann looked up swiftly.

"It is impossible."

The other's blood boiled.

"Shoot me, if you will, yet you have given me until sunrise. I ask but for three hours, and I will return."

"If you would see your wife, I will have madame informed——"

Duprez clenched his hands.

"No, not that, not that!" he cried, and in despair made his last appeal. "I have done wrong and am ready to pay the penalty, yet consider the circumstances. My wife lies sick at my house yonder; I must see her, speak with her, if but for one hour."

The Prussian shook his head, but had the prisoner been less short-sighted, he might have read a world of indecision in the grey eyes that looked furtively into his.

"It is impossible," he repeated; "the regulations are precise. I have no choice."

"But surely, sir, under the circumstances, I may claim a small indulgence. Such an act would be generous."

"But not war, monsieur," rejoined the other in French, a bitter smile lighting the tense features. He nodded to the corporal, who led the prisoner away biting his lips beneath the Prussian's taunt.

It was but a score yards from the school to the village inn, and in an empty room which the innkeeper used as a storehouse Gaston Duprez was confined. Though they would shoot him upon the morrow, the Prussians, it seemed, were determined that

he should not starve in the meanwhile; he supped without appetite, hardly daring to picture what his wife's state of mind must be at that moment. His hope was that she held him already dead, killed by a chance bullet, his fear lest any of the villagers might have seen him in the hands of the enemy and have gone to her with the news. Sooner or later she must know, yet he prayed that that knowledge might be kept from her as long as was possible. At nine o'clock a soldier brought him a mattress, furnished him with a pen, ink, and some paper, and left the prisoner writing as if for his life. Deaf to the sounds in the village, to the guttural cries of the Prussians, to the ring of their feet in the alley that ran beneath the closely barred window high in the wall above him, he wrote feverishly on. Now and again he heard someone moving in the adjoining room, the kitchen of the inn, but gave no thought to the matter, having much on his hands ere morning. At midnight a sentry visited his prison and found him with a sheaf of papers before him. Duprez scarcely heeded the man's entry and hasty withdrawal; his work was no more than a fourth done.

Within an hour, however, he could not help noticing footsteps upon the further side of the door, the clank of a sabre, the noise of drawers being closed, of furniture being moved about. Duprez set it down to his guard preparing for the night, continued his writing, and then, having come to the end of his paper, rose and crossed the room to the door to beg the favour of some more. He knocked, but none answered, and then tried the latch in the hope of waking the sentry. To his surprise, the door swung outwards. In utter amazement he looked round the kitchen, which, in spite of his defective vision, he saw was unoccupied. He stood staring for a moment and then peered in the direction of the door opening upon the lane that ran down to the main street. Tiptoeing towards it, a nearer inspection showed him that, though bolted, the fastenings were upon the inner face. He returned to his prison, caught up his papers from the table, and closing the door of the storeroom, stole softly to the kitchen door. With utmost caution he drew back the bolts—not a soul in the inn was stirring—and slipped forth into the alley. He hardly realised his good fortune, nor could he quite satisfy himself that he was not dreaming till at last, without catching sight of a single sentry, he found himself clear of the village and in the narrow lane that led upwards to his home.

He was free, thanks to the incompetence of the Prussians, free beyond the chances of recapture and with no parole given. He sucked in the cool, night air in deep breaths, as a man who regains the surface of the waters, rubbed his eyes, which were aching from the loss of his spectacles, and gaily-breasted the hill. A lamp was burning in his wife's bedroom as if in expectation of his coming, and the garden was fragrant with the scent of the roses, for the night was warm and still—so still that a Prussian challenge rose clear from beside the river.

He opened the door and mounted the stairs with heart light as a child's, to pause on reaching the upper floor. He had caught the murmur of voices—of voices that came from his wife's room. For a moment he thought it must be the maid, but in the next he was undeceived. One voice he knew well enough, but the low, deep tones that answered were not those of a woman.

His heart stood still. Who could be with Marguerite at that hour? Countless grim tales of invasion current in that frontier country came back to his remembrance. The night was close, and the perspiration stood in beads upon his forehead as he stole towards the end of the passage. The door was ajar, and he peered into the room.

A lamp stood on a table near the bed, and, despite the loss of his spectacles, he could just distinguish his wife's profile, caught the glint of her light brown hair that spread the pillow, and cowered in the shadows, nor dared take a further step.

"To think that you could do this!" she breathed. She spoke in her native tongue—German—and from her tone the husband guessed there were tears in her eyes.

"It was my duty." The man's voice was low, and Duprez, as he shrank against the jamb of the door, could just make out a lank, uniformed figure standing bareheaded at the foot of the bed. Then his wife laughed—a strange, unfamiliar laugh—and rose upon her arm till she was sitting upright facing the other.

"And they will shoot him, Fritz, and at your orders. Heaven gives you a rare revenge."

"Grete——" The watcher clenched his hands. Who was it that dared address his wife by that name, the German diminutive of Marguerite—a name by which, for some reason, she had never suffered him, her own husband, to call her?

"Grete, Heaven has given me a hard task, but I have chosen."



“‘You have come, then, to mock me.’”

Again that bitter laugh, and hot came the woman's protest.

"You have come, then, to mock me, to throw in my teeth the very words I used at our parting, but I tell you, Fritz von Kalmann, of my choice I have never repented."

Gaston Duprez caught his breath and blinked at the man, the gaunt, clean-shaven Prussian who stood at the foot of the bed, like some child caught in wrongdoing. His memory was waking. Months after their marriage his wife had confessed that she might have been the bride of a Prussian officer who once lived in her native town of Saarbruck, beyond the frontier. At the time he had thought nothing of the matter, had rallied her on having once given her heart to a Prussian, but he could not forget that she had begged him, with tears in her eyes, never again to refer to the subject.

"To mock you? No, not that—to explain, rather." He spoke deliberately, and Duprez now recognised the voice. "He appealed to me, and I—I had to make my choice between my duty to the king I serve and——"

It had grown very still in the chamber as the man hesitated; it was only the creak of the door upon its hinges that broke the silence. Neither of those within the room

noticed it. The Prussian had drawn rather closer to the bed, and the woman was looking up into the grave, careworn features. "—and loyalty, Grete, to a memory of other days."

"And then, Fritz?" whispered the other, without meeting his glance, though her cheeks were aflush.

"And then this gentleman"—Gaston Duprez had entered the room—"whom I know not, but whose presence, despite the uniform he wears, is an honour to my house, leaves his prisoner unguarded, the doors of the prison unbarred."

Save for a little cry, half pleasure, half surprise, from Marguerite, all was silence once again till the Prussian spoke.

"My task was a hard one, I may be at fault; may I never repent of my choice."

"Ah, Fritz," breathed the woman, as if wrung with sudden pain, though a great pride burned in her eyes in spite of the tears that dimmed them, "your revenge is magnificent."

A weary smile flickered upon the man's lips.

"But, Grete, it is not war."

It was then that Marguerite Duprez, with her hand in her husband's, kissed the Prussian officer.

## TO DAPHNE—AGED SIX.

**B**IG blue eyes  
And sunny smile;

Laughing lips  
That know no guile;

Dear little head with its clustering, wayward curls;  
Queen among girls!

Tender heart  
That beats so true;  
Baby voice  
That thrills me through;

Dear little hand, with its lingering, soft caress,  
Soothing distress!

Big blue eyes  
Where the love-light glows,  
Tender heart  
Whence the love-light flows—

Gaze on me, beat for me, love me, for I'm all thine,  
Baby mine!

VACHELL PHILPOT.



A NEAT PROBLEM

'WHAT are yer standin' here for?'

"Nuffink."

"Well, just move on. If everybody was to stand in the wan place, how would the rest get past?"

## THE EDITOR'S SCRAP-BOOK.

### THE GRUMBLING CLERK.

"If you can't use these theatre tickets," said the head of the firm to his secretary, "give them to one of the clerks."

"I'll give them to Croke," said the secretary, with a twinkle in his eye. Croke was champion grumbler of the office.

"Oh, Croke," he said, looking in on the clerks five minutes later, "the governor wants you to do something for him."

Croke, who was in the act of delicately paring

his nails, shut up his knife with a click of annoyance.

"Just like him," he snapped; "always taking a chap off his work and setting him to do something else. How does he suppose I shall get my work done when I'm interrupted every other minute? It isn't reasonable to expect it!"

"Oh, he doesn't want you to do anything very much."

"Yes, I know. I've been there before. Right across London on some wild-goose chase, and the





THE NATURAL ASSUMPTION.

THE HOST: Aunt, this is Mr. Psalter, of the Canary Islands.

HIS AUNT: Oh, how delightful! You sing, of course?

trains don't fit back—I know," he said, wagging his head with bitter irony.

"Well, shall I tell him you can't do it?"

"Yes, and get me the sack! No, I shall have to do it, confound him! What is it?"

The secretary put the envelope in his hand.

"He wants you to go to the theatre to-night and take your wife, and you can leave work at once and go home to fetch her."

Croke seized the tickets, and his long face broadened in a smile as he shut the ledgers with a snap. But he was frowning again before he got into his great-coat, and as he went through the door he turned and said—

"How do I know my wife can get ready in time? People can't go to the theatre at a moment's notice. It isn't reasonable to expect it."



"Now, mind you wake me at Doncaster, guard!" said an irritable and dyspeptic-looking passenger, "and don't forget I'm a very heavy sleeper."

"Right, sir," replied the guard, pocketing his tip. But such was his difficulty in rousing him, when Doncaster was reached, that he finally seized him bodily and planked him down on the platform, half awake, in the midst of his luggage.

"Hi! stop! murder!—what are you doing?" cried the suddenly roused passenger, running after the receding train. He had only wanted to be waked at Doncaster to take a pill.

## MAIDEN MEDITATION.

He looks so stern, and yet his eyes are blue,  
An exquisite and captivating hue.  
Oh, that a happy future would bestow  
On me the power to make them melt and glow  
In some romantic, thrilling interview.

He looks so stiff, could he unbend to woo  
Or fall a captive to a woman's coo?  
Unerring intuition answers: "No,  
He looks so stern."

Yet I'll be bold and see what I can do,  
His heart may be impressionable, too,  
Though hitherto unmarked by Cupid's bow;  
And, maybe, from his wish to keep it so,  
To hide his vulnerable point from view,  
He looks so stern.

Jessie Pope.



TEACHER (giving lesson in geography): It is very difficult to reach the North Pole on account of the ice surrounding it. Many have tried and failed to do so.

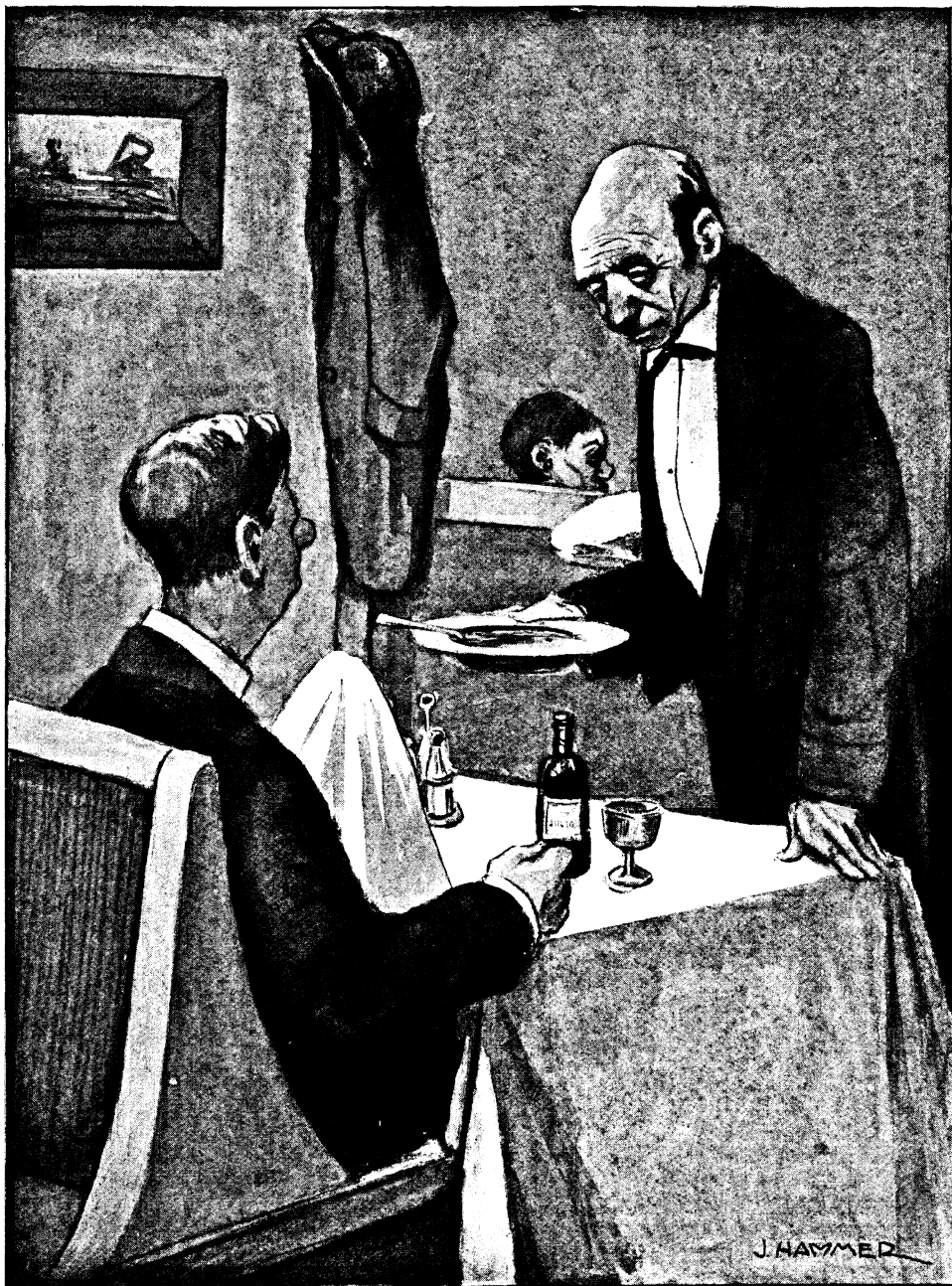
SMALL BOY (in tone of contempt): Why don't they slide there, then?



THE RETORT SARCASTIC.

SHE: Hullo, John! Are you shaving?

HE: No, I'm blackleading the grate. What are you doing? At the theatre or out for a drive?



MORE CRUELTY TO DUMB CREATURES.

GENT: Waiter, take that soup away; there is a fly in it.

WAITER: So there is, sir. Very unfortunate, sir.

GENT: Unfortunate? It's very careless, I should say.

WAITER: It is, indeed, sir. Poor little creature! It must be awful to be scalded to death in boiling hot soup.

## THE MILL-WATER.

*(A Ballad of Old Cockaigne.)*

This is the wraith of an ancient rhyme  
 (Three blue pigs in the mill-water)  
 Of olden time and the year's gold prime,  
 (Wan white weeds for the king's daughter).

The king's young harper was fair and free,  
 (Free and fair was the king's daughter)  
 Where'er he went she was sure to be.  
 (Songs are sweet by the mill-water.)

She had bonnie bower-maids, one, two, three,  
 (Three brown maids by the mill-water)  
 King's daughters call their maids "Marie,"  
 (Three Maries for the king's daughter).

There is rich red wine in the castle-hall,  
 (Three merry maids and a hall-porter)  
 The harper snores by the chamber-wall,  
 (Wet green whins for the king's daughter).

There comes an end to the weariest rhyme,  
 (Candle and bell for the king's daughter).  
 But it's Mr. Swinburne that's most to blame,  
 (Three blue pigs in the mill-water).

*Rosamund Marriott Watson.*



IN a certain country district the name of a village, Packthorpe, was altered to Rotheringham. The porter at the little station could not, how-



"AWFU'!"

"WEE!, Elder, and how did ye like London?"

"Ah, that's nae kind of a place, juist nae kind of a place at a', man. Ye'll scarce creedit me, but I saw folk walkin' about o' the Sawbath as blythe and happy for a' the world as though 'twere juist an ordinar' week-day. 'Twere fair ter-r-rible!"

The harper has courted them each and all,  
 (One by one by the mill-water)  
 He has courted them both in bower and hall,  
 (Six green eyes on the king's daughter).

The bower mald's mother has slain her swine,  
 (Murrain and moan by the mill-water)  
 Three warm weeks are as good as nine,  
 (Bright blue blains for the king's daughter).

The harper sits in the hall to sup,  
 (An empty seat for the king's daughter)  
 Three bonnie bower-maids fill his cup,  
 (Pieces of gold for the hall-porter).

She's kept her tryst by the dark mill-dyke,  
 (Wet wan feet for the king's daughter)  
 All musicians are much alike,  
 (Three blue pigs in the mill-water.)

ever, adjust his mental capacity for its new requirements, and when the trains stopped, he would put his head in at the carriage windows, exclaiming: "Anyone there for here?"




SMALL GIRL (of twelve): Is this a library?

LIBRARIAN: Yes.

SMALL GIRL: I want something wicked and excitin' and bad.

LIBRARIAN: I couldn't let you have any book like that, little girl.

SMALL GIRL: It ain't for me. I've read 'em. It's for my younger sister.



YOU'VE NO NEED TO DIET  
IF YOU TAKE  
**BEECHAM'S PILLS.**

**DELICIOUS COFFEE**  
**RED**  
**WHITE**  
**& BLUE**

For Breakfast & after Dinner  
In making, use less quantity, it being so  
much stronger than ordinary COFFEE:

ONLY THE BEST IS  
GOOD ENOUGH FOR THE  
. . INVENTORS OF . .  
**BERMALINE**  
**BREAD.**

IS ANY LESS GOOD  
ENOUGH FOR YOU?

**A TRIAL SOLICITED.**



**"SHOW" DAY.**

**ARTIST:** It is very gracious of your ladyship to honour my humble show.

**HER LADYSHIP:** As a matter of fact, we'd really arranged to look at some new frocks at Madame Mode's, but this horrible fog makes the light so bad that we've come to look at your pictures instead.

**WHEN JANE STANDS UP TO SING.**

When Jane stands up in church to sing,  
She sings away with all her might;  
And as she cannot read the hymn  
She does not get the words quite right.

She sings about all kinds of things—  
About the stained-glass window-panes.  
The Shepherd with the little lambs,  
The shepherds watching on the plains:

About the halos and the crowns,  
And fishers on a stormy sea;  
And when her thoughts are sorrowful  
She sings them in a minor key.

About the preacher, too, she sings,  
And all the people—and—once—oh—  
Mother and I had such a fright!  
For Jane was singing a solo.

*Elizabeth Piercy.*



**PHILANTHROPIC OLD GENTLEMAN** (on last 'bus at midnight from Westminster Bridge): You keep late hours, driver. How far have you to go?

**DRIVER:** Late, governor! We don't call this late. I only has to drive through Kennington and Brixton to Streatham Hill, and take the 'bus round to the yard, and then I has all the rest o' the evenin' to myself!

# WIVES' ADVICE.

STOUT HUSBANDS INDUCED TO TRY ANTIPON.

**M**ARRIED ladies who, from being much over-stout, have been reduced by the famous Antipon treatment to normal weight and beautiful proportions, frequently induce their husbands (if they are inelegantly stout) to adopt the same course.

The Antipon treatment is so pleasant and exhilarating, and produces such wonderful results from the very beginning, that all stout persons, once having commenced it, eagerly and gratefully follow it until the desired result is obtained.

That result is the permanent cure of obesity; not a mere temporary reduction of fat but an absolute cure.

Antipon, whilst eradicating all superfluous fatty matter, gets a destroying grip on the obstinate tendency to get abnormally fleshy. Once having regained correct weight for height, and elegant proportions, the treatment may be discarded without dread of a re-development of excessive fat.

In severe cases of corpulency Antipon will take off as much as 3 lb. within a day and a night of the first dose; while in ordinary cases the decrease is from 8 ozs. upwards.

When so sure and agreeable a method of regaining beauty of form and robust health is within the reach of even modest purses, it is a wonder so many stout persons seem to persist in enduring their discomforting and most ungraceful burden.

## A NOTEWORTHY OPINION.

Our contemporary *The Graphic*, writing recently upon the recognised standard remedy for the lasting cure of corpulence, says: "A wonderful specific in the treatment of corpulence is Antipon, which causes a daily diminution of fat until normal weight is attained. The cure is lasting and the treatment is harmless. The tonic effects of Antipon are wonderful: the appetite is

increased, digestion promoted, the blood purified, and the muscles strengthened."

## LOOK YOUR BEST.

No one who is very much overweight can possibly look his (or her) best.

Obesity is not only an uncomely load to bear, but is a strain upon health and vitality; and without health "to look your best" is a vain desire.

Stout reader, you will very soon look your best if you go in for a short course of Antipon.

The superfluous fat will melt away as if by magic, and at the same time you will grow stronger and stronger with every dose of the refreshing specific, the fame of which is now pretty well world-wide.

The Antipon treatment is not one of the starving and dragging sort, but one which helps to feed you back to health and beauty, and gives you no trouble or anxiety.

An Oxfordshire Surgeon writes: "I am trying it (Antipon) in a serious case of a man weighing 16 stone, short, and with heart affection. He already has lost 3 stone."

STRONG ADVOCACY  
FROM A GREAT  
FRENCH PHYSICIAN.

*"Avenue Marceau, Paris."*

"I must frankly say that Antipon is the only product I have ever met with for very quick, very efficacious, and absolutely harmless reduction of obesity; all other things are perfectly useless, and some absolutely dangerous.

"You are at perfect liberty to make whatever use you like of this letter, as I like to do justice to such perfect products.

(Signed) "DR. RICCIARDI."

Antipon is sold in bottles, price 2s. 6d. and 4s. 6d., by Chemists, Stores, &c.; or, in the event of difficulty, may be had (on remitting amount), carriage paid, privately packed, direct from the Antipon Company, Olmar Street, London, S.E.



WIFE (to very stout husband): "You are always complaining about your stoutness, when you know well enough that Antipon is what you want. See what it did for me. I lost nearly thirty pounds in a few weeks!"



DADDY-LONG-LEGS.

"A dragon-fly," said Herbert.  
 "A brute!" said Mary Anne;  
 "I see him plain against the pane,  
 He'll sting us if he can."  
 ("A daddy-long-legs," I remarked;  
 "He couldn't sting a man!")  
 "He's dangerous," said Herbert,  
 "We'd better kill him now."  
 "You thoughtful man," said Mary Anne,  
 "The only thing is how?"  
 ("A daddy-long-legs," I remarked;  
 "He couldn't sting a cow!")

"You do it, then," said Herbert,  
 "And mind you hold it firm."  
 "A silly plan," said Mary Anne,  
 "The horrid thing would squirm."  
 ("A daddy-long-legs," I remarked;  
 "He wouldn't touch a worm!")

"I'll shy a boot," said Herbert.

Of course the glass was burst.  
 The brute sprang wide the other side—  
 He'd been there from the first.  
 ("A daddy-long-legs," I remarked;  
 And then I think I cursed!

H. F. Rubinstein.



A MATTER OF GEOGRAPHY.

"ARE you a waiter from choice or necessity?"  
 "From Switzerland, sir."

"Nought easier," said Herbert,  
 "We'll poison him with jam."  
 Said she: "You goose, why, that's no use,  
 The beast would simply cram."  
 ("A daddy-long-legs," I remarked;  
 "He couldn't hurt a lamb!")

"If that is so," said Herbert,  
 "How can we kill the brat?"  
 "Why, take a towel, you stupid owl,  
 And simply squash him flat!"  
 ("A daddy-long-legs," I remarked;  
 "He couldn't harm a cat!")

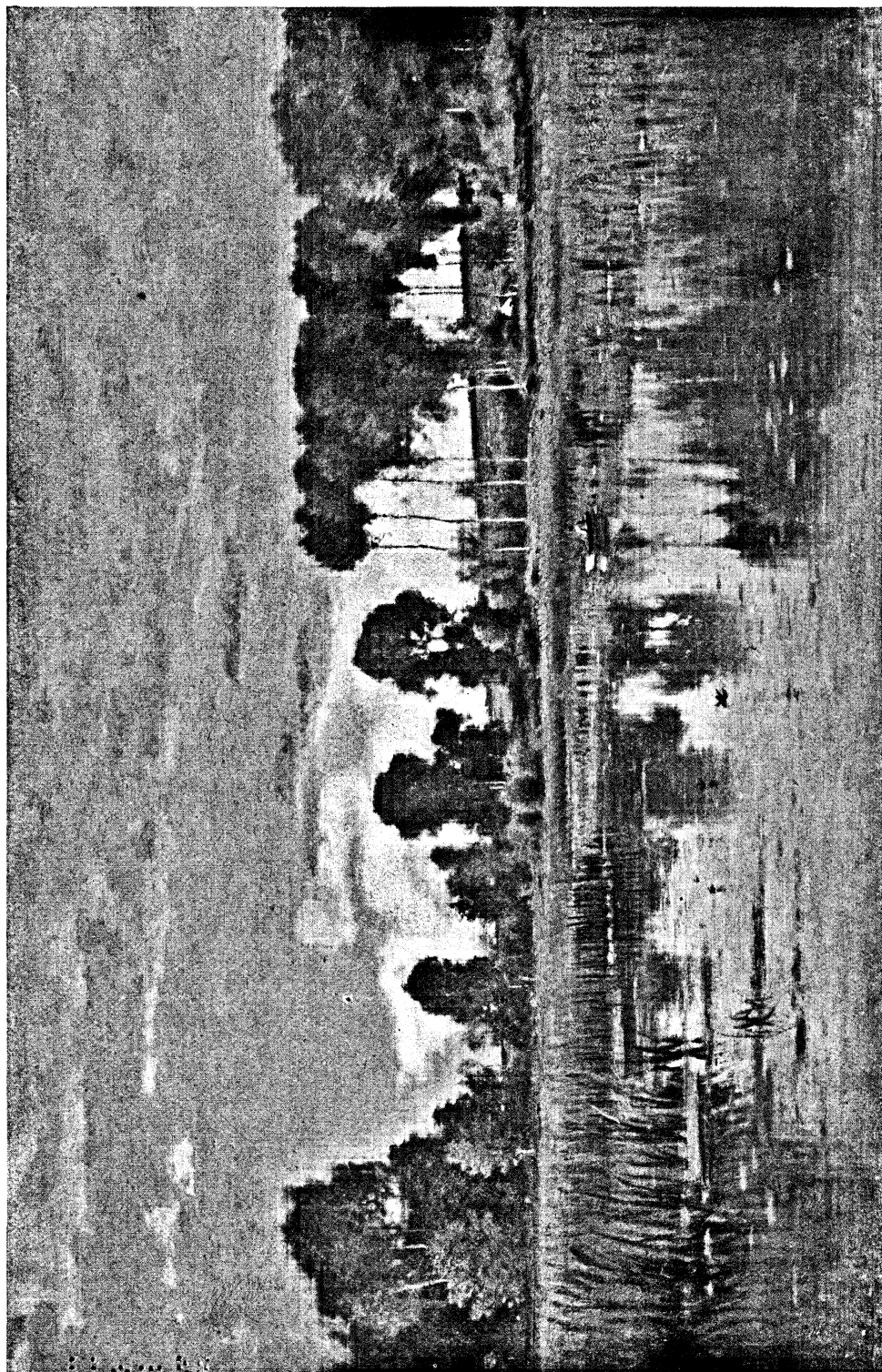
MARGARET, aged four, came running in from her morning walk, and told her mother she had met grannie, who had given her a penny "to give to a chap." When asked to explain, she said: "Oh, I mean the gentleman what sweeps the crossing!"



PASSENGER (on top of horse-'bus to driver, as they pass a broken-down motor-'bus): Wouldn't you like to give him a tow?

DRIVER: I'd like to give him the bloomin' boot!





"AFTER THE RAIN." BY ERNEST PARTON.  
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"WILLOWS AND RUSHES." BY ERNEST PARTON.

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## THE ART OF MR. ERNEST PARTON.

BY AUSTIN CHESTER.

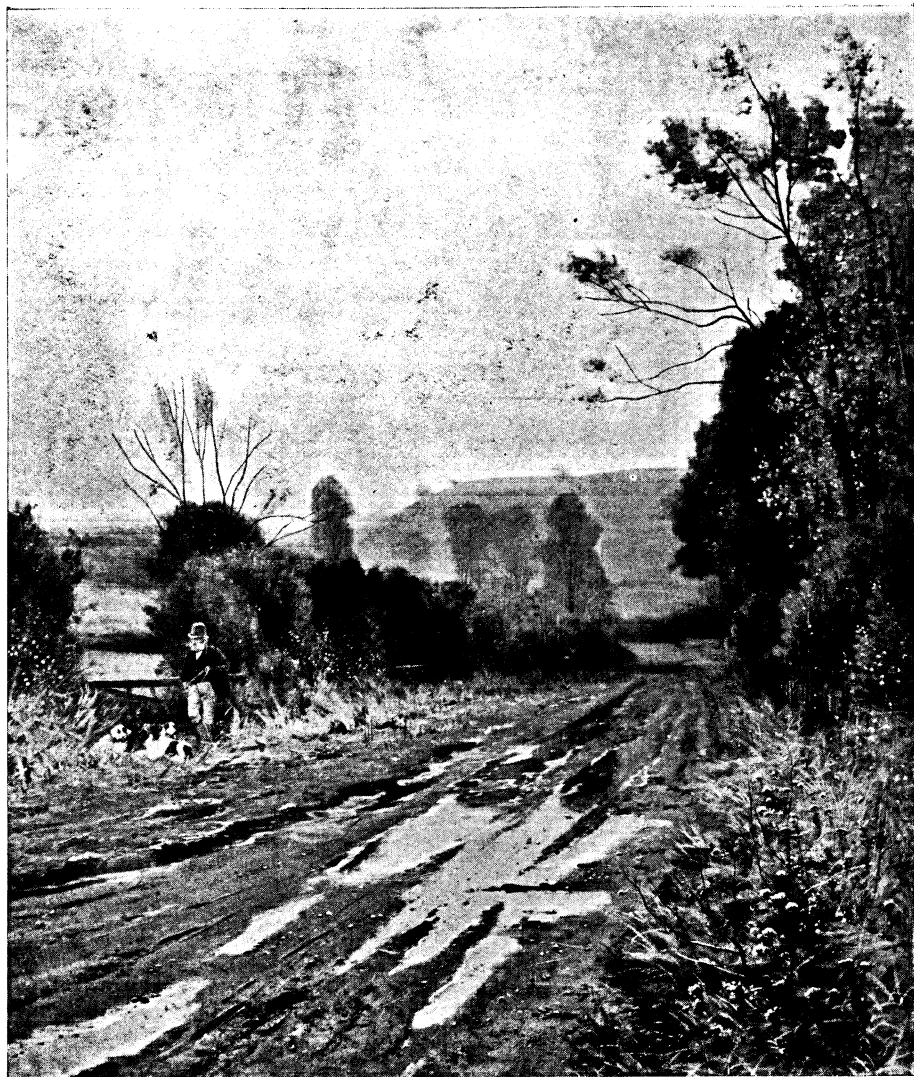
TO the curious tidal rise and fall of art, as in turn it swept the shores of the civilised world, we have before, in this series of articles, alluded in comment on the signs of its flowing westward.

Quite recently we referred to the history of American art in the article we presented to our readers on the work of Mr. George Hitchcock; and although that distinguished artist's talent must be taken to example one of the phases of progress made by American figure-painting, the progress of landscape art, which we now illustrate from the work of Mr. Ernest Parton, is progressing towards excellence on somewhat similar lines.

Writing on the subject of his nation's advance in art, Mr. J. C. Van Dyck says: "Besides the painters who reside in the United States, there is a large contingent of Americans resident abroad which perhaps belongs to the American School as much as to any other. These painters do not, however, represent the land to the extent usually assumed by Europeans. Indeed, it is

questionable if they represent America in any way. James McNeill Whistler, though American born, is an example of this modern man without a country. No nation can claim him as an artist, because he seems to have no nationality. E. A. Abbey, John S. Sargent, Mark Fisher, and J. J. Shannon, are Americans only by birth."

On the other hand, it might well be urged that the national temperament counts for a good deal in the work of each of these men; and when we add to the list of names just enumerated that of Mr. Ernest Parton, that temperament must certainly be taken into account, for there is a quick apprehension in the youth of all nations, and especially in that of America, which, lending itself easily to foreign influence, makes its people early users of the possibilities offered abroad for quick development. We see this adaptability peculiarly well illustrated by the great Fantaisiste Whistler's intelligent adoption of the art of Japan, and his equally intelligent intermingling of this with that of



"THE WET ROAD." BY ERNEST PARTON.

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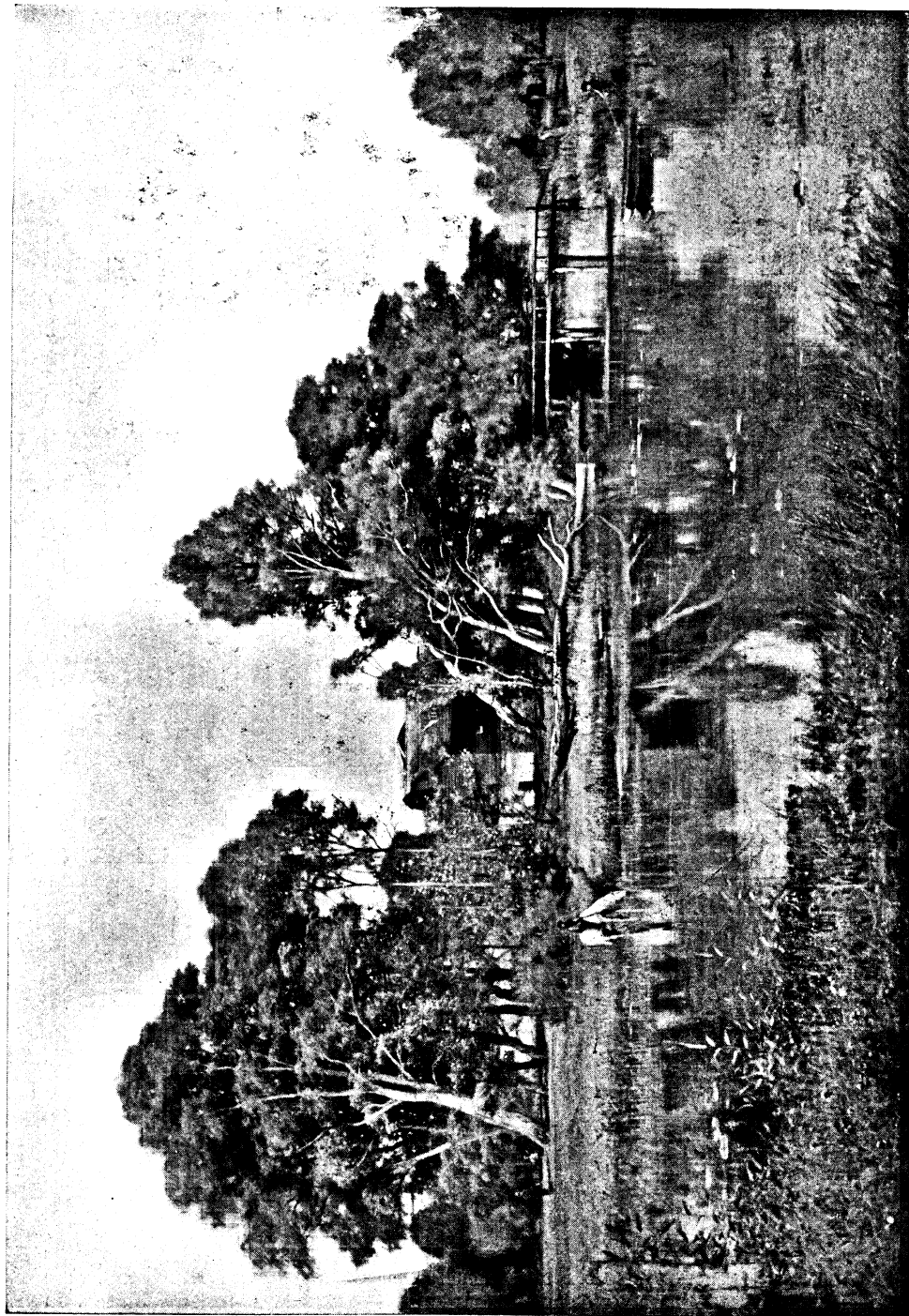
Velasquez, the greatest of all impressionists. If, as Mr. Van Dyck asserts, these men are without nationality, it is equally true that no country but America, even under the forcing lights of France, could so quickly have yielded such precocious response to foreign suggestion.

With regard to that special branch of art—landscape-painting—which Mr. Parton follows, Mr. Charles H. Caffin, in his recently published book, "The Story of American Painting," accounts for the rapid advance made by his countrymen as distinctly traceable to the period when they came into touch with

the men of Barbizon. Then it was, he writes, that they learned "how to look at Nature, how to select from it and compose the essentials into a picture, and how to paint with a full, firm brush in masses," and then that "landscape-painting, as distinct from mere representation of landscape, commenced."

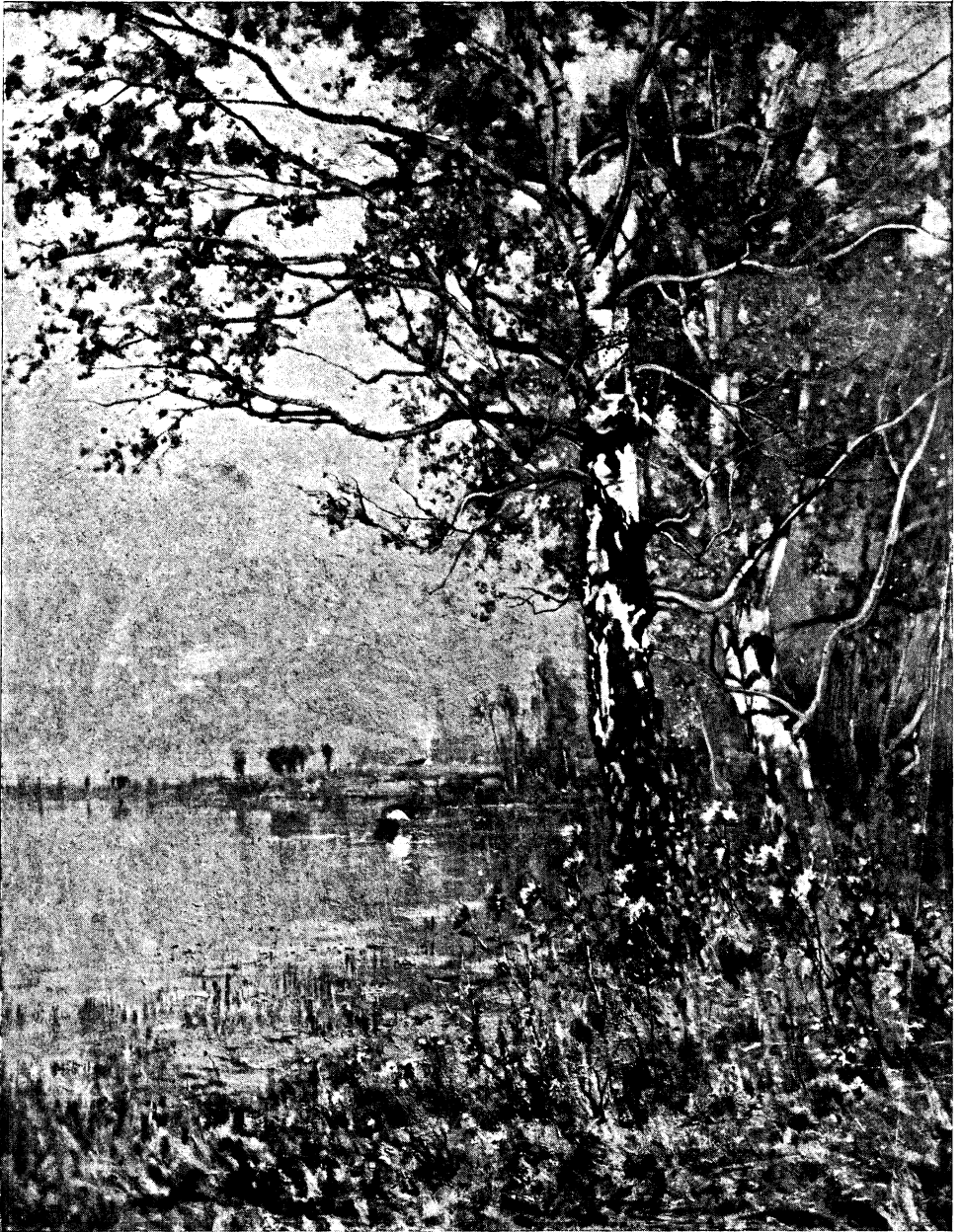
Rousseau, the recreant from classicism, discovered the artistic hunting-ground of the Forest of Fontainebleau as early as 1830, and he "set up his tent" in Barbizon in 1848. Here he was joined by Millet, Corot, and such of his compatriots—and later





"HOUGHTON MILL." BY ERNEST PARTON.  
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"AFTER RAIN." BY ERNEST PARTON.

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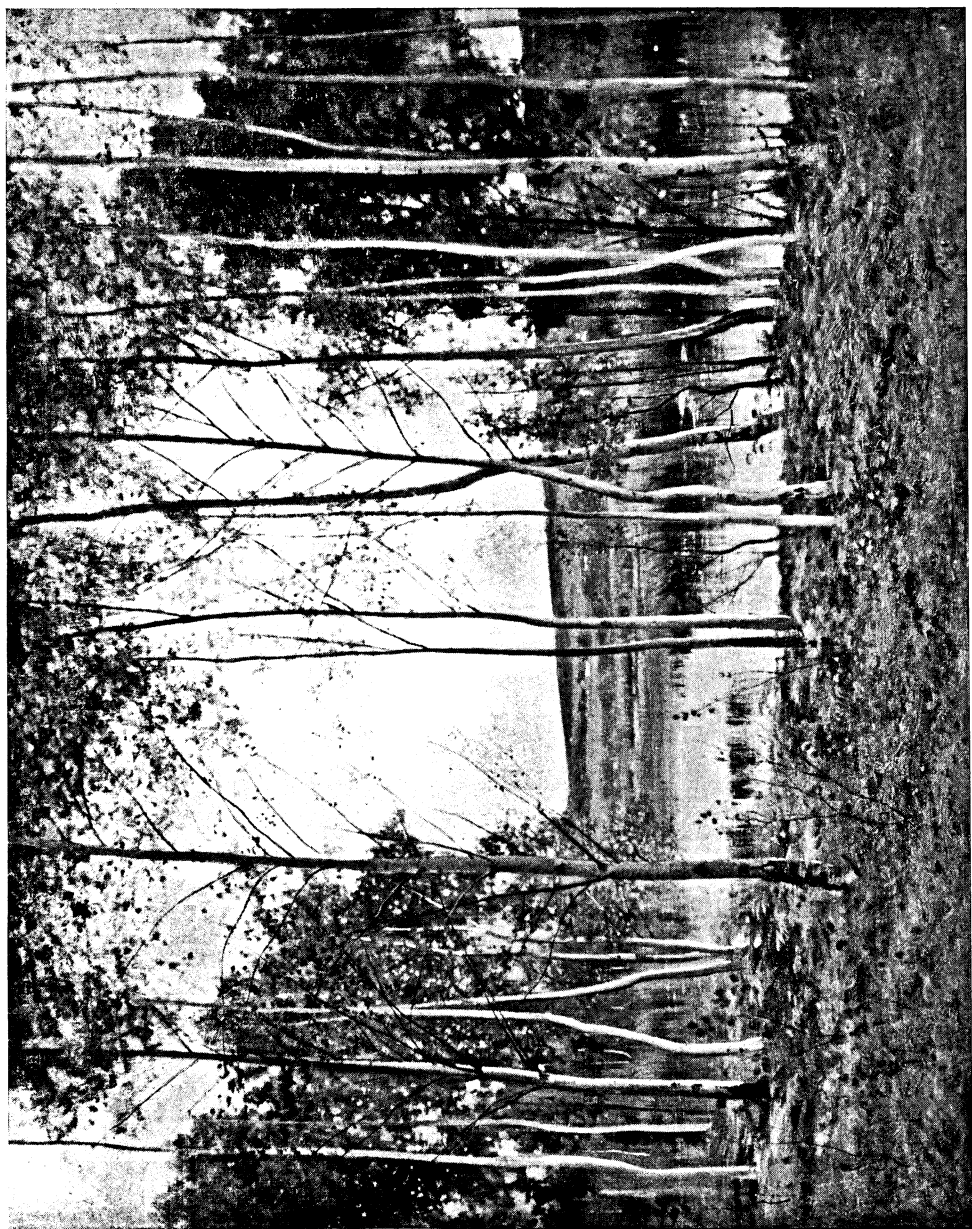
followed by a small American contingent—who were revolutionaries against the existent theory that declared form everything, colour nothing, and who were anxious to break for themselves new ground, and by opening up fresh experiences prove that the spiritual it was that triumphed over the obvious. The

impressions gleaned at Barbizon by the Americans, again to quote Mr. Caffin, were transmitted by them to other painters in their own country "with a degree of authority and persuasiveness that have given to the principles involved a firm and lasting hold upon the American imagination."



"IN THE SILENT WOODS." BY ERNEST PARTON.

*Reproduced by permission of Joseph Becham, Esq., J.P.*



"THE END OF THE LAKE." BY ERNEST PARTON.

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"IN A FAIRY WOODLAND." BY ERNEST PARTON.

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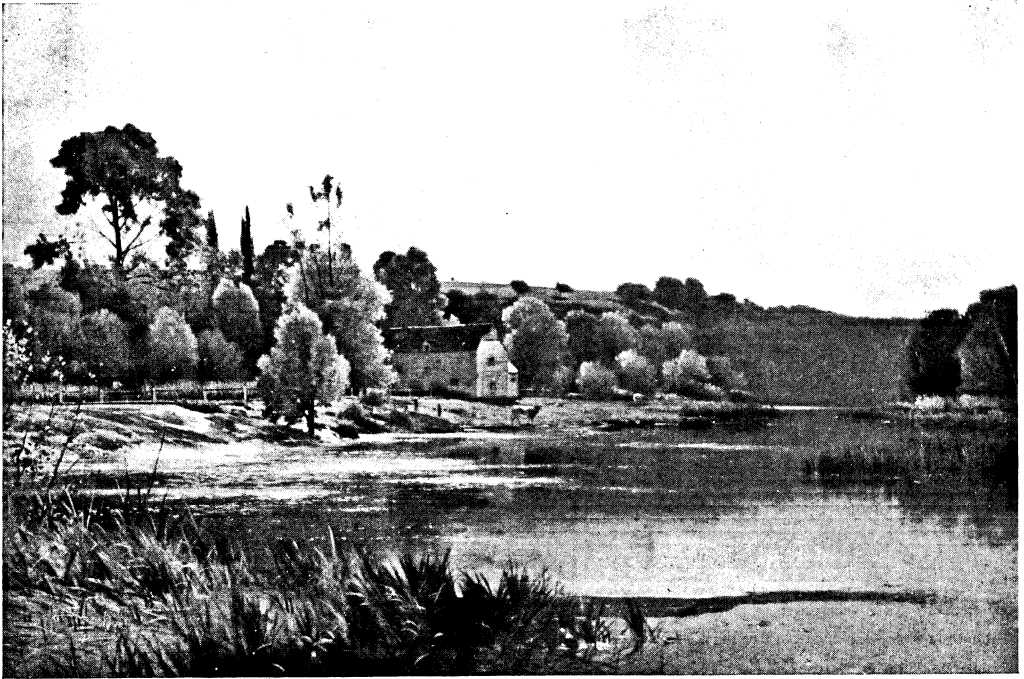
From the opinions of Mr. Caffin, as with the opinions of Mr. Van Dyck, we venture partially to differ, to the extent of thinking that while he has stated a truth, he has not stated the whole truth, having omitted to take into account that quality of idealism which, native to all young worlds, makes itself heard as the dominant note in American landscape-painting.

It was the Catskill Mountains which *au fond* made an artist of George Innes, who, in the van when his fellow-countrymen sought instruction in France, is one of America's landscape men, if not the greatest of them; and although it is many years since Mr. Parton lived within range of their influence, it was the Catskill Mountains that made of him an artist.



Born at Hudson, New York, in 1845, Ernest Parton grew to adolescence on the banks of one of the noblest rivers of the United States. The varied and beautiful scenery, the sloping near range of hills, and the far, noble Catskill Mountains, with their impressive grandeur, made him early one with Nature. Here, where the spirit of poetry lifted each scene into an idyll, he, as a boy, would stare at the solemn folds of the hills, note the accents of light as, dappling the ground, they filtered through a canopy of leaf; or would watch the loveliness of reflected light, of atmospheric effect, unconsciously

as a profession. From the first he was undoubtedly designed by Nature for an artist, since he has that acute sense of sight, abnormally developed, which marks the species as apart from ordinary men. When he was little past twenty, he joined his brother Arthur, who was then a member of the National Academy in New York. There, after a time, having worked industriously from Nature, and gained a few points from his brother and the other clever men who frequented the studio, he took a studio of his own, and since Fortune now smiled upon him, the proceeds of his industry soon



"ON THE AVON." BY ERNEST PARTON.

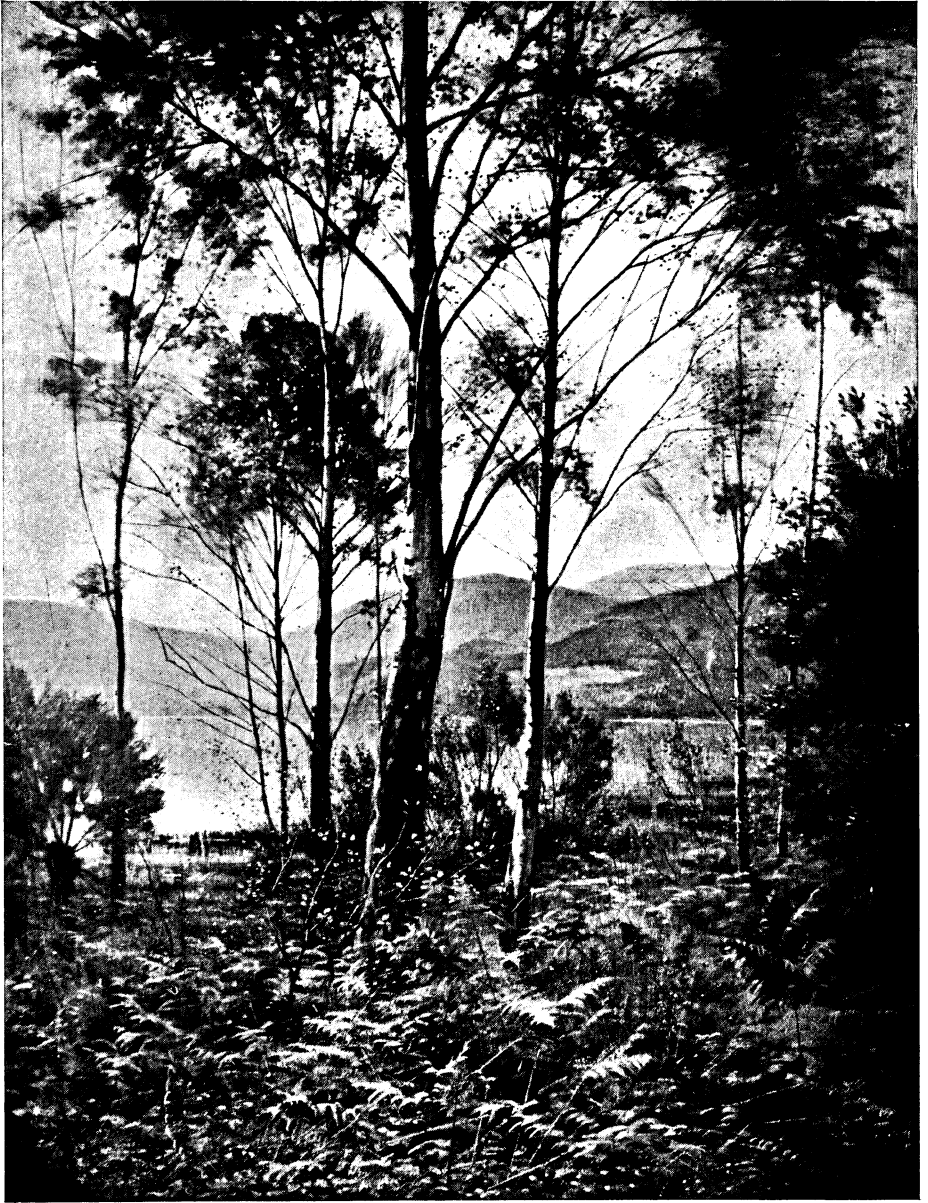
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analysing colour and tone, thus gaining a delicacy of insight into the rich, harmonious magic of common things, and longing for the power to express his vision in the terms of paint.

At odd times, when his general education, begun at the Hudson Academy and afterwards continued under tutors at home, allowed of such theft, he would sketch from Nature and, boy-like, hide his first attempts to note her subtleties of colour and of tone; and it was not until he had reached an age when he felt justified in following his instincts that he embarked on painting

allowed of his coming further afield in search of suggestion and experience.

In 1873 he took ship for Scotland. Why for Scotland especially, it is difficult for Mr. Parton now to say, unless one can trace his decision to admiration for the work of William Hart, who was an importation from Scotland into the Hudson River Colony, and an intimate student of the atmospheric miracles of Nature's effects, or because the mountainous character of the land appealed to him as familiar. But to Scotland it was that he came, making his way thence to the English Lakes, the sober harmony, the grave, almost



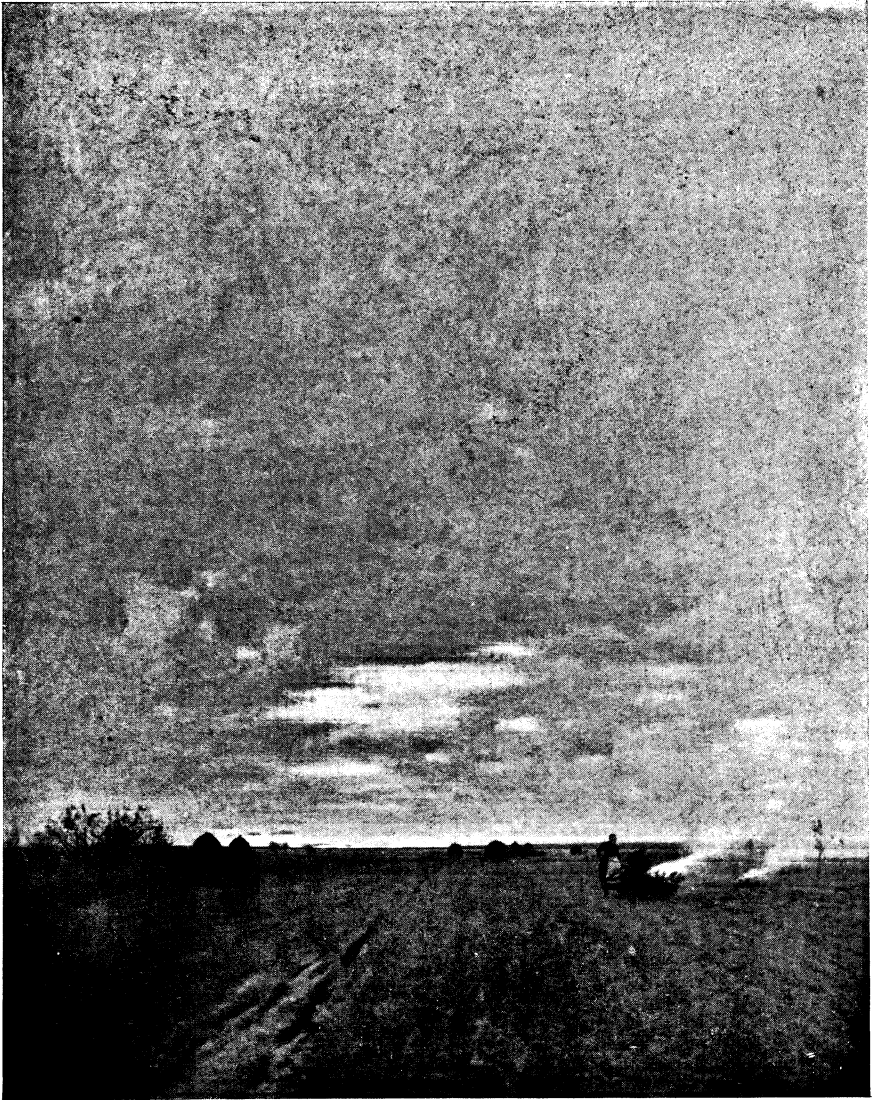
"ULLSWATER, FROM GLENCOIN WOODS." BY ERNEST PARTON.

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musical, subtlety of their tone entralling him. One friend only in England had he then—an amateur artist; and one day, as he stood on Mettlebridge, hesitating whether to accept the invitation of this man to go along with him to Keswick, the alternative to which plan was to make his own solitary way back over the Border, he by chance fell in

with a stranger who proved instrumental in altering and directing not only his immediate scheme, but the whole course of his life. The two, entering into talk, discovered mutual interests and occupations, and after a bit, one giving rein to a not very natural impetuosity, and the other to a peculiarly characteristic credulity, they entered into a





"THE CLOSE OF THE DAY." BY ERNEST PARTON.

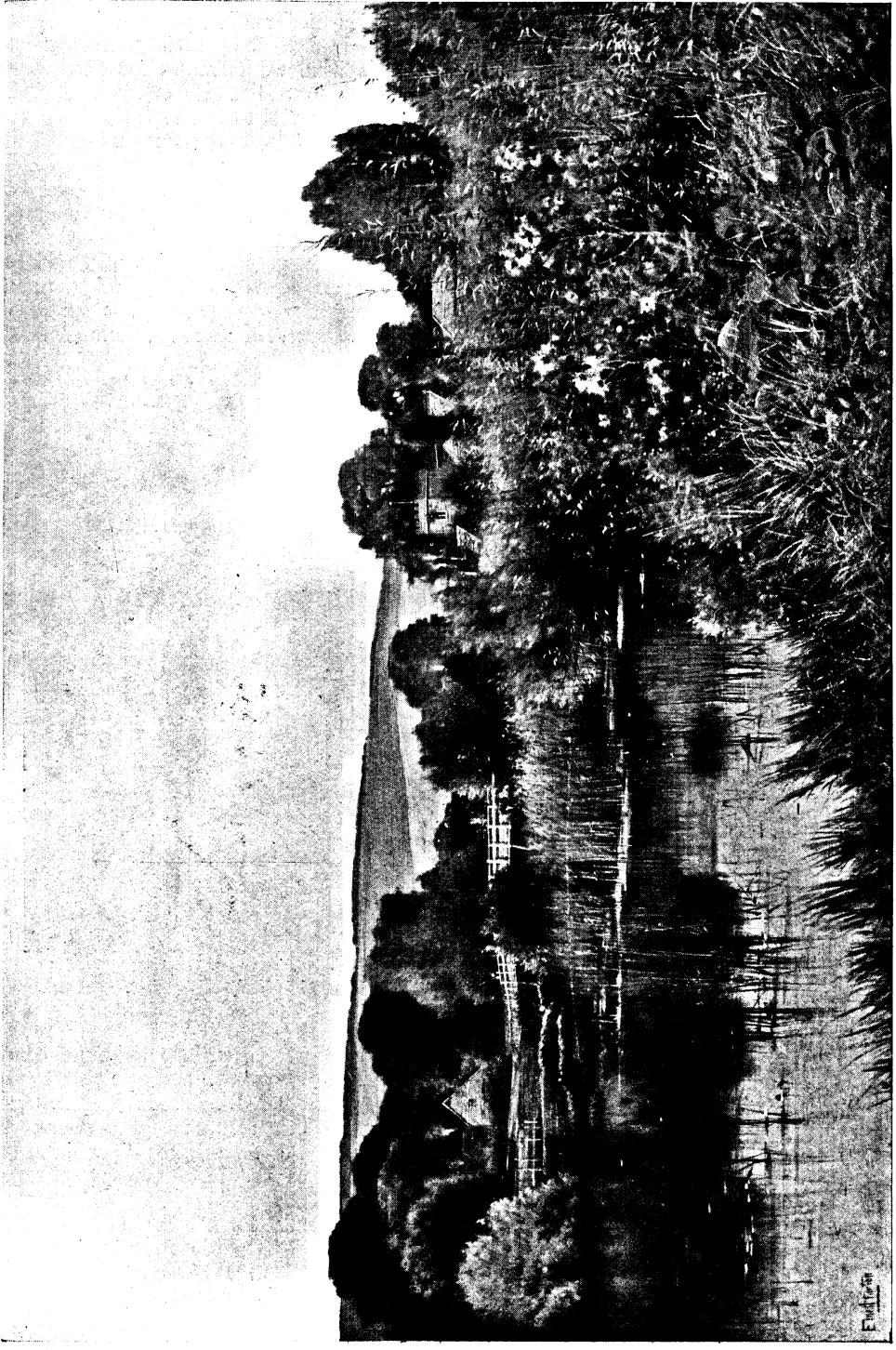
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compact which was as unbusiness-like an undertaking as has ever been chronicled. The stranger offered Mr. Parton the use of a studio in London, which, it appeared, he used but upon rare occasions, and Mr. Parton, on the understanding that he should pay half its rent, turned south and was soon established in his chance-found abode in Newman Street. The first picture to issue from here was painted from sketches he had taken while in the Lake District. Already he was a craftsman of singular accomplishment, and, delicately handled,

this particular picture held a quality of completeness which gained for it admission and good hanging in the Royal Scottish Academy.

A faithful student of the terms of the art he had elected to pursue, Mr. Parton worked hard in Newman Street for some time, gaining gradually in paint that technical mastery which comes to none, save the genius, without infinite labour.

He had his successes and his disappointments, his failures and his achievements: and the year 1875 saw his beginning of



“STREATLEY, FROM GORING.” BY ERNEST PARTON.  
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exhibition of those Academy pictures by which, with the exception of one year, 1881, he has never failed to be represented. He became a member of the Hogarth Club, which membership incidentally led to his getting to know, and quite intimately, his most prominent fellow-countryman here, James McNeill Whistler.

Mr. Parton painted steadily for three or four years in the studio in Newman Street, and then, when the first harvest from the foreign fields was imported into America, which was somewhere about 1875 or 1876, rumour of the superiority of the French School, as a means of training, reached him ;

and Rousseau were dead ; it was the year in which Diaz died, and Dupré was getting to be an old man, but their works "were become well-known formulas for expressing certain emotions about Nature." Barbizon, therefore, was felt to be no fitting nursery for the more impressionist men, and when its popularity declined, that of Grez arose.

It was in Grez that Mr. Parton gained knowledge of the volume and buoyancy of the clouds, learned carefully to analyse the relative values of light and shade, and to add the French cleverness of technique to an already vigorous self-expression. Grez made him conversant with those subtle nuances of



"A POOL ON THE MEDWAY." BY ERNEST PARTON.

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and he, too, made his way to the Forest of Fontainebleau, to join himself to the English, American, Swedish, Spanish, Italian, and Russian colony which had sprung up at Grez.

In the now defunct *Magazine of Art*, R. A. M. Stephenson, in the placating, irresistible way characteristic of his writing, presented, in the November number of 1893, a word-picture of Grez, which Mr. Ernest Parton illustrated by some half-dozen admirable drawings.

"At Barbizon," he wrote, "it was especially difficult to get away from the old men, who had made it their own, and yet do anything like Art." In 1876, Millet, Corot,

colour which give a curious quality of completeness to his work, and, doubtless, his sojourn there added the strand of foreign experience which is necessary, it seems, to the perfecting of all art, for recognition of his talent was the instant result of his return.

"The Silent Pool," "Reflections au bord de l'eau," "On the River Loing near Fontainebleau," were his contributions to the 1878 Academy, and the following year saw his "The Waning of the Year" purchased from that exhibition by the nation under the terms of the Chantrey Bequest. In the same year the Corporation of Liverpool

bought his picture "The Woodland Home" for the Walker Art Gallery.

Since then Mr. Parton has taken medals and diplomas at Salons and International Exhibitions, and many of his pictures have

light, and his almost clairvoyant vision, pressing forward through the obvious screen of form, has succeeded in apprehending and showing the abstract beauty of Nature which lies behind.



"AT LONGPRÉ, PICARDY." BY ERNEST PARTON.

*Reproduced by permission of the Artist.*

been etched and issued to the public. Holloway College holds "Through the Woods," the Corporation of Durban "The End of the Lake," and the Manchester Corporation possesses "The Land of Hiawatha."

He is a close student of the theory of

Mr. Parton married Miss Gough, a member of the Irish family of which Viscount Gough is the head, and has his London studio on Carlton Hill, but still spends much of each year sojourning in France, where many of his most characteristic pictures have been painted.

# SACCHARISSA AND THE CANDLESTICKS.

By E. NESBIT.



SACCHARISSA collects candlesticks. Most of us collect something or other—postage stamps, or butterflies, or botanical specimens, or hearts, or memories. Even in our village there are collectors.

Captain Smeeth collects old maps; Miss Eversleigh old music. Saccharissa collects candlesticks. I believe she has eighty-seven, and she makes it a point of honour never to spend more than five shillings on a pair. The number of candlesticks added to her collection is strictly regulated by her income, and that, in turn, is regulated by the number of the fortunes made in trade. Her own trade is literature, or, as she calls it, "writing"; her special branch, the department dealing with deportment, with what is and is not done, with the inner mysteries of that rigid rule of conduct prevailing in ducal circles. When trade is good, there is a brisk market for "dainty manuals" of manners, from which the *nouveaux riches* can study the fluctuating status of fish-knives, the correct weapon with which to attack *hors d'œuvres*; can learn that you must say London and not town, luncheon and not lunch, as well as how to address a letter to an archbishop and what not to do with your table-napkins—serviettes, the N.R. call them.

An influx of newly married actresses, anxious not to disgrace the peerage, was responsible for that increase in Saccharissa's income which led her, timid and reluctant at first, but presently enthusiastic, from brass to Sheffield plate. The first lapse was my fault. On the anniversary of her wedding-day I gave her, not without malice, I admit, a pair of stately candlesticks. Sheffield plate—the best period. The poison worked.

She thanked me prettily—she does everything as prettily as anything can be done—but I could see that her mind was not at ease.

"We have no candles big enough for them," she said presently. "Twelves are

all right for the brass candlesticks, but these ought to wear eights. If you come with me, we could run up to Bates and get the candles, and be back in heaps of time for dinner."

We were then at tea. I have formed the habit of dropping in at Saccharissa's at or after tea-time about four days a week. I adore Saccharissa—so does everybody. I also adore Mabel, to whom I happen to be engaged. This gives me the right to adore Saccharissa as much as I like, which is a good deal.

So she put on her fur cloak and the little velvet hood that the wild winds of our village in winter require, and we went to get the candles. But on the way we had to pass Ilford's. If you happen to like the kind of things that Saccharissa likes, it is safer to pass the den of a lion whose front door has been carelessly left open than to pass Ilford's. Ilford has in his window the most seductive things in the world. Salt-cellars and snuffer trays, old china, old paintings on glass, enamelled snuff-boxes that have belonged to people's grand-uncles, and tortoiseshell tea-caddies that have belonged to people's grand-mothers. I had bought those candlesticks there. And there was another pair—branching out like forest trees, three lights to each.

With one accord we stopped outside Ilford's and flattened our noses on his plate-glass.

"I'll just ask——" she said, and we went in.

Ilford was there. He knows his business. As we came out, having bought nothing, Saccharissa turned and said over her shoulder, just as though it didn't really much matter either way—

"I'll have those three-branched candlesticks. You might send them down."

We went on up the street—I intentionally mute, she silent with the agony of remorse.

"It's your fault," she said presently. "They go so perfectly with the others you gave me. But I don't know what Henry will say."

Henry said nothing. He is married to Saccharissa, and has the sense to know when he is well off. I dined there that night, and when she said timidly: "You haven't admired





"We came home, each carrying a candlestick."



the new candlesticks, Henry ; Edward gave me two of them," he said—

"That was very charming of Edward, but I am sorry for the old ones. Their poor brass noses seem a little out of joint, don't they ?"

So then she set up candles in the fifteen brass candlesticks that stand on the high dark mantelpiece, and lighted them all.

"Poor dears," she said, "I love them as much as ever, only I love the others more."

"That," said Henry, "is one of the tragedies of life to which the victims can never accustom themselves."

Henry goes to sleep after dinner. When he leaves London, he leaves his brains behind him, and becomes for the time as like one of our landed gentry as an Egyptologist of modest means can hope to be. He is out all day tramping wet fields with dog and gun. So that after dinner Saccharissa and I are practically *tête-à-tête* over the coffee cups.

Her drawing-room is charming, white-panelled from floor to ceiling ; it holds all the things that I should buy if I were not quite certain that Mabel's drawing-room will have a Morris paper and be furnished throughout by Liberty's. There is a cabinet of buhl, a bulging marqueterie bureau, banner-screens and chair-seats in faded needlework, framed samplers and coloured prints, a work-table with faint pink silk flutings, a little piano, carved and sink fluted. It is the perfect drawing-room, and I am never otherwise than happy in it.

I could see that its mistress was not happy. There was a cloud.

"What is it ?" I asked softly.

"Did you see . . . ." she answered dreamily, "that other pair at Ilford's ? They must be fresh in to-day. I never saw them before. The weight of them ! I don't mind talking about them to you—I wouldn't to everyone. But you've got too much sense to go and buy them and give them to me for a Christmas present. They're seven guineas. . . . Did you see them ?"

"I saw them right enough," I said—"clumsy, ugly things." And I wished she had not read my thought about Christmas.

\* \* \* \* \*

It was the day before yesterday that I dropped in, late, for tea. Saccharissa greeted me brightly, but the brightness went out like a spent firework at the pouring of my second cup, and I knew she had something on her mind. So little happens in our

village that anything in anybody's mind is at once noted as a godsend. Besides . . .

"Have you been to Ilford's lately ?" I said, to make conversation. "He has a bureau that . . . ."

"Oh, I know," she said, and her tone touched the tragic, "he has a lot of new things—perfect, perfect ! That man's coining money. Everyone said how silly to start a curio shop in a little village like this ; but it's on the high road from Dover to Hastings, and people in motors stop and buy everything that other people want. Henry's furious," she added.

"Nothing," said I, "will induce me to believe that your husband ever wanted anything from Ilford's so much as to mind who else got it."

"I don't mean that," said Saccharissa. "You know I don't. It's about his pension."

"I didn't know he had one."

"He hasn't, of course. But his friends have been trying to get him one."

"Twenty years' devotion to early Egyptian art does deserve something of its country," said I ; "it's a dull subject."

"It's very interesting, if you only knew." Saccharissa doesn't know, but she is so fond of her husband that it doesn't matter. "He is furious, first because he didn't get the pension, and then because anyone should have thought he wanted it."

"And is that what makes you sad ?"

"I'm not sad," said she. "And you'd be sad if your only son didn't love you."

I laughed. The idea of anyone's not loving Saccharissa is in itself amusing, but Toto, who hangs worshipping to her adorable apron-strings !

"But he doesn't," she said. "I'm going to get rid of that Italian nurse. To-day I said to him : 'You love mother, don't you, Toto ?' and the wretch said : 'You love also the papa, Toto, *non e ver ?*' and Toto looked like an owl, and—oh, it was terrible !—he said—"

"Well ?"

"He said : 'I like best eating !' "

"And that's what makes you sad ?"

"I'm not sad," she insisted. "On the contrary, I've sold an article that's been refused by every magazine and newspaper in Europe. 'How Dukes Dine,' it's called—you remember it. The new Socialist weekly has given me seven guineas for it."

I could not for the moment understand why that should seem to be so faultlessly just a price.

Saccharissa enlightened me.

"It is," she said almost in a whisper, "exactly what Ilford wants for those candlesticks. Oh, you can't have forgotten—the ones I said you weren't to give me for Christmas."

"It's a direct Providence," I said.

"It's a wile of the devil," said she.

"Come and buy them," said I gaily.

"What will Henry say?" she said, picked up her empty cup, put it down again, and smiled at me.

"Oh, get your coat on," I said. "You know you mean to buy them."

"Indeed I don't," said she. "I can't afford them. I won't buy them. I won't——"

"Someone in a motor," I said, contentedly stretching my feet to the fire, "will find them a bargain."

"I hate you!" she said. "Oh, shall we? Do you think we'd better? Do you think it would be wrong? You see, I never thought anybody would buy 'How Dukes Dine'; and it does seem almost as if——"

"Why quarrel with your luck?" said I. "But there—if you don't buy them, I shall."

"For Mabel?" she wavered; and I think she would have been almost glad of the chance to be self-sacrificing.

"No, for my sister Lucy."

"I will put on my hood," she said. She does not love my sister Lucy any more than I do.

So we went up the street, where the south-west wind blew so that we could hardly keep our feet, and had to cling to each other like shipwrecked mariners. Ilford was just shutting up his shop, but he was quite pleased to see us. We came home, each carrying a candlestick and "wishing," like Charles Lamb with the brown folios, "that they had been twice as heavy."

We spent a joyous hour polishing them, and I was asked to dinner. The candlesticks shone and gleamed.

"Aren't they heavenly?" she said. "I never saw such candlesticks! Ought we to call them candlesticks at all? Isn't it disrespectful? Aren't they candelabra when they're as big as that?"

"Candelabra!" I murmured reverently.

"I believe," she said, putting away the plate-brush and wash-leather, "that Henry will kill me."

But Henry was very sleepy. He only remarked that the new candlesticks were very large—and didn't Saccharissa think they rather overweighted everything else?

And to-night I could not resist the temptation of seeing her once more in her radiant happiness, basking in life's sunshine—or, to be more accurate, enjoying life's summer warmth under the shade of six silver branches; twelve, if you count the first ones she bought, and fourteen counting the ones I gave her for the wedding-day, which, of course, having no branches, really don't count at all. The street was cold and bleak. I saw Captain Smeeth through his uncurtained window bending over his old maps, and the sound of Miss Eversleigh's harp came to me through closed panes. Almost all the leaves were off the trees, and the wind was sweeping them into corners, trying to persuade itself and me that, after all, summer was only rubbish and had better be cleared up as soon as possible, swept away into corners and forgotten.

The little, short red curtains of Saccharissa's house glowed welcomingly. I saw already the dull pleasant pink of her Lowestoft teacups, the gleam of her silver tea-service, the magic of her smile, and the splendour of her candlesticks. There would be a fire, too—a wood fire—in the old, high, square grate of the panelled parlour. Muffins, perhaps. It is the baker's day for them.

The panelled parlour was there all right, but the tea was cold, there were no muffins, and the fire was out.

The candlesticks were there, it is true, and so was Saccharissa, but she was not smiling.

"Tut, tut!" I said a little petulantly, perhaps, for muffins are muffins, and I was disappointed. "You ought to radiate joy as the sun does heat. The candlesticks!"

"That's just it," she said.

"Did Henry kill you?" I asked as sympathetically as I could, for I like my tea warm, and, as I said before, muffins are muffins.

"On the contrary," she affirmed, "he said they were worth double the money."

"Toto?" I hazarded.

"The darling!" she said, with a brief flicker of enthusiasm. "He told me he didn't want to be an angel, because nurse said Protestants didn't go to Heaven. I must get rid of that woman. 'And *you* are a Protestant, mammy, aren't you?' he said. And he hugged me. He *is* sweet!"

"And the candlesticks?" said I. "You've let the fire out. Can't I get some wood, or a candle-end, or something? The candlesticks! They cheer you, don't they? So beautiful, and your very own?"

"That's just it," she said slowly. "I don't

mind telling you," she was good enough to say, "because you always understand everything."

"Why, aren't they?"

"Oh, yes, they're Sheffield all right," she said. "I found the copper line at the bottom, and I've filed a bit of the silver edging, and all that. *They're* all right."

"Well, then?" said I, doing useless things with cinders and the poker and a wax match.

"Well—don't you see?" she said slowly. "It's all over. They're *mine*. I can never go and buy them again. Never again any more as long as I live."

"There are others," said I.

"Not like those. Besides, I mustn't let Sheffield plate become a habit. Habits are so difficult to break, aren't they?"

"I could break those candlesticks," I said, "the twisty part—easily."

"Ah, don't!" she said; "it's all very beautiful. They're mine, and I'm frightfully happy, really. But I can't ever again. It's the getting them that's so beautiful—and now that's over."

"It's like," said I, "it's like—it's like love and marriage."

"Oh, Henry," she said to her husband, who at that moment came in, very muddy, with four partridges, a hare, and a pheasant dead and dangling—"oh, Henry, he says our candlesticks are like love and marriage!"

"Because they light the night of life?" said Henry. "He is very polite."

I let him think so.

## TO THE LARK.

**D**OST thou indeed at Heaven's gate sing,  
As Shakespeare tells, young happy bird?  
Yes, in thy paean thou dost fling  
The heavenliest passion ever heard.

A rapture that could not be learnt  
In any other place than Heaven,  
A rapture caught while incense burnt  
In holy censers angel-graven.

And while the choir of God upraised  
The morning or the evening hymn—  
When Heaven with golden sunlight blazed,  
Or with a purple calm was dim.

And thou must, surely, in the skies  
When singing at the sacred gate  
In envy of those symphonies,  
Have heard the roaring wheel of Fate.

And, since thou hast, thou knowest more  
Of God's high purposes than we  
Who only have the tale of yore  
To ope our eyes and make us see.

And if thy knowledge made thee sad,  
If all was tangled in God's loom,  
Would then thy singing make us glad?  
Would it not whelm us all in gloom?

WALLACE BERTRAM NICHOLS.

# HUMAN NATURE AND GOLF.

BY SIR HENRY SETON-KARR, C.M.G.

THE personal equation, the mental equipment of the golfer, counts for a good deal in this popular and widespread game. No doubt this is part of its general attraction, as well as its chief justification, in the eyes of your true philosopher, who may recognise the valuable mental tonic that is really involved in the whacking of the small white ball.

In one respect, however, we must discriminate. Champion players and professionals are a class apart. If they have any nerves, the fact is seldom apparent to the man in the crowd looking on at a match, unless when some short but critical putt occasionally lips the hole. Then the fact that champions are also human, like himself, arouses a wave of sympathy in the breast of the ordinary golfer. But, generally speaking, your first-class, with-a-rope-enclosed, crowd-accompanied golfer has achieved such a remarkable domination of muscle over mind and nerve, such a machine-like, automatic style of play,

that his regularity of movement and perfection of result become almost monotonous, and even irritating to the spectator. Let us, then, look upon these past masters of the game of golf as a class apart, a small, select, and almost superhuman set of individuals, whose mental and nerve vagaries have, by special aptitude and long practice, been entirely subordinated and trodden under foot.

At the other end of the scale are the intellectual, highly distinguished in other walks of life, and possibly aged, golfers, who play the game for air, exercise, and society, but not seriously as a game. We are not sure but that these are the players who really get the most enjoyment out of golf. They have no great keenness to excel,

and therefore a consistent mediocrity or even a marked inferiority of play has no effect upon their temper. They are fully aware of their own limitations, so far as skill in the game is concerned; bad strokes leave them calm and still happy, while an occasional good stroke causes them no undue elation. Their language in reference to the game is always—or shall we say almost always?—quite fit for publication, while they often find themselves capable of some philosophic line of thought in the midst of a strenuous match. “What is your scheme of life?” was a question suddenly addressed

to his astonished lady opponent on the putting-green by a well-known literary and golfing peer. Possibly, if she were a keen golfer, the answer might have been: “Consistently to hole my putts.” But this is not authoritatively recorded.

In between the champions and the philosophers come the large class of ordinary golfers, the great bulk of our noble army, who play the game as occu-

pation and opportunity serve, partly, no doubt, for health and relaxation, and partly, also, because some form of friendly competition appears to be a necessity of human companionship and of civilised existence. This large class plays the game keenly, strenuously, and more or less uncertainly, and always with some display both of the virtues and the weaknesses of human nature.

There is the man, for example, who apparently only puts forth his real mettle when collared, or when playing a losing game, or when he is a competitor in a keen and exciting competition. This kind of temperament is doubtless an enviable gift. It means much success, many half-crowns, various medals and golfing trophies. It is a



“What is your scheme of life?”

question, of course, of nerve, character, and mental equipment generally. This is the kind of individual who usually also succeeds in other and more important occupations and walks of life. A man who can hole a ten-foot putt on the eighteenth green, and so decide the fate of a "final," possibly in the championship, must have well-controlled nerves and a strong will, as well as some trust in the demon or goddess (which is it?) of chance who controls the fortunes of golf. The other day I saw the final game in a foursome competition on a well-known seaside course on the south coast. It had been keenly contested, and one couple, the favourites,

Then there is the man who cannot play a losing game. Many a good partner and pleasant opponent suffers from this kind of temperament. It is a variable factor, no doubt, and not necessarily always apparent. Sometimes it may be a question of health or fitness. But the mental idiosyncrasy may be there, and if so, it will operate, as a rule, most inopportunistly.

I was once playing in a Parliamentary four-ball match at Sandwich against two tough opponents. They stood one up at the fourteenth. I had halved the hole in an inferior six, against a strong wind. My partner lay on the far edge of the green in four, at least



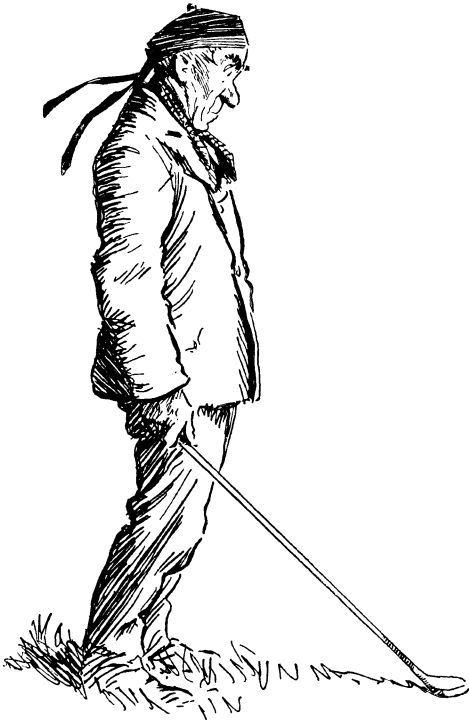
"The personal relations between the players were somewhat strained when they parted."

stood dormy one. At the last hole, a bogey five, their ball lay dead in four. It was a certain five for them. Their opponents' ball lay twenty feet from the hole in three. The green was new and rather rough. Unless the twenty-foot putt was holed, the favourites must win the game and the competition. But a bold firm putt with a cleek over twenty feet of rough, new-laid green found the back of the hole and made the match square. The same partners then proceeded to win the nineteenth hole and the competition, their opponents missing a six-foot putt by a hair's breadth on a perfect green. Nerve and temperament, combined with some degree of fortune, no doubt, were the real deciding factors of the game.

fifty feet from the hole. We assumed he would be content with the half. But not a bit of it. "Show me the hole," he cried, then forthwith puttied straight over the whole width of a hog's back green, and, marvellous to relate, in went the ball. I apologised profusely to our opponents, and was privately rebuked by my partner for so apologising. "That putt is going to win us the match," quoth he; and, as a matter of fact, I believe it did. It was, in sooth, a heart-breaking fluke from our opponents' point of view, and they seemed to recognise accordingly that Fate that day was against them. We won the match. Personally, I have always been rather superstitious about putting. It is really rather an uncanny

business. Some days long putts go in, other days they resolutely decline to do so, while the player is not conscious of any difference in his mental or physical condition, or in his style of play, to warrant such different results. On the face of it, to knock a little white ball accurately along a few yards or feet of smooth green turf is a simple matter enough. And yet more golf matches, from championships downwards, are lost and won on the putting green than in any other department of the game. Anybody can hole long putts in practice, or when they are not

and, in fact, cannot always be, provided for in rules. Something must always be left to the good sense and good feeling of the players themselves. Nothing is more annoying, for example—particularly in cold weather—than to be kept waiting many minutes on every tee for a slow couple in front. But it is constantly happening to every ordinary golfer who plays at the average orthodox rate of progress, and occasionally the delay may be so pronounced as to detract from the enjoyment of the game, and even interfere with the retarded golfer's accuracy of play.



"'I've had yer baa' in ma poke for the last five meenutes.'"

required. The real art consists in holing them when they are really wanted, and when a hole or a match depends on it. A candid old golfer was once heard to remark that when he had one for the hole, he often took two, but when he had two for it, he generally took one. A good deal of human nature plus some luck, and the confidence that is born of luck and skill combined, must be at the back of it all.

Apart from its effect on the skill of the players and the fortunes of the game, human nature enters very largely, of course, into the etiquette of golf and the spirit in which it is played. These matters are not necessarily,

In the case of many pronounced and hardened offenders in this respect—men who stroll slowly between strokes, address the ball for several moments at each stroke, and look at every putt from all points of view before making the attempt—I am charitable enough to suppose that they err in ignorance, and because, being always slow players, they do not know from experience what it means, or what annoyance this delay causes to those behind them. This delay, therefore, must often be suffered in silence, and taken as part of the discipline of golf. But to the nervous, highly strung temperament, in some keenly contested match, slow play in front



is a thorn in the flesh, and the dawdling player has much to answer for.

I think I have already remarked that the spirit of the game cannot always be laid down in printed rules. A friend of mine, a fairly good four-handicap man, but with an ugly style, told me a story the other day of his experience with an egotistical golfer in the far north which has some element of humour. It was a casual match, and his opponent was the private secretary of the great man of the neighbourhood. My friend played badly going out, and at the ninth hole was two or three down. His opponent then casually remarked, in a superior tone, that my friend evidently wanted some lessons in the game, for a worse style he had never seen. This kind of remark was the very thing required to put my friend on his mettle, and make him pull out his best game. He set his teeth, played with the utmost determination, and won every hole on the homeward journey. The personal relations between the players were somewhat strained when they parted. This little story has obviously a twofold moral. In addition to the elementary but unwritten truism that it is better, in a friendly contest, and on general principles, to avoid gratuitously annoying your opponent, there remains the further and more recondite consideration that it is as well to gauge beforehand the temperament and character of such opponent before getting a rise out of him.

In all these questions of the unwritten laws of golf, so much depends on local feeling and human environment. Our prehistoric ancestors, no doubt, may occasionally have used

their (stone-headed) niblicks for other purposes than to strike the ball out of bunkers. If golf links were permissible at Dartmoor, let us say, it is quite conceivable that to stamp your opponent's ball into the ground when he was not looking, or to kick it unobserved into a hazard, was thoroughly in accordance with convict etiquette. Not the deed, but the discovery, would be the despicable offence. Our humdrum civilised notions of modern (golf) etiquette, and what really constituted good form, would be entirely out of place in human surroundings of this kind. But elemental human nature is still always with us, which reminds me, in conclusion, of the story of two old Highland friends, playing a match for a few bawbees on their local course. The match was closely contested—all even and two to play. The evening was drawing on, and the light was not good. From the penultimate tee it so happened that inferior drives took them both into the rough. They were hunting for their respective balls, and in response to a brilliant thought, Sandy, after a time, being unable to find his ball, dropped another ball surreptitiously down his trouser-leg on to a good lie, and duly proclaimed the fact that he had at last found his ball. "Na, na," cried Donald, unable to contain himself, "I've had yer baa' in ma poke (pocket) for the last five meenutes." He had some time since quietly pocketed Sandy's ball, thereby hoping to claim the hole because his opponent had lost his ball. It is doubtless recorded that this celebrated match was halved, than which there can be no better ending to any golf contest.

## NOCTURNE.

**I** STOOD above the city's fret and fume,

And saw its grey spires wedge the dark'ning sky;

And many a towering shaft that flaunted high

Athwart the dying day its sable plume;

And gradually each varied shape assume

The mystic mantle of the night. And I

Watched how the lights leapt as the dark drew nigh

The funeral pyre of day the night illumine.

How strange a glamour doth the darkness hold!

The grim, brick factory a palace glows,

And black and bold, an ogre's castle grows

The great gasometer. The streets are gold;

With liquid fire the sullen river flows;

And over all the stars, aloof and cold.

MARK ZANGWILL

# ROSAMUND'S LADY.

By F. FRANKFORT MOORE.



It was by the merest chance that we came upon Laughton Place. We were staying for a month at the hotel at Sandycliffe, my husband being fond of deep-sea fishing, and doing his best to make me fond of it also by taking me out with him in the boat—decidedly the worst possible way of effecting his purpose. I might have formed a friendship—strictly platonic and academic—for this form of sport if I had been permitted to indulge in it in imagination from the hotel windows; but the mere act of getting into the boat was sufficient to turn my heart against fishing and, after two or three hours of rearing and rolling and rocking, against my husband as well. But, without being a hypocrite and pretending to enjoy it, I was a meek enough wife to endure it without flinching—when I failed to invent an adequate excuse for avoiding it.

One day, at the beginning of our third week, I found myself at the end of my excuses. I knew that nothing short of a fit or a "stroke" would avail against the boatman's report of the arrival of the mackerel in the Channel; so I put on my wraps and an oilskin overall, and accompanied Edgar with as good grace as possible, and a large package of sandwiches, down to the boat, a sound, staunch, broad-beamed craft of the type which some people call a pleasure-boat, but which others do not. (I was among the others.)

It was a fine day ashore, but at sea it was, I discovered, simply vile. The wind was strong enough to make it necessary to take in a reef of the mainsail within half an hour of embarking, but by this time every square inch of the boat had been soused in the waves, and every square inch of our oilskins was glistening with spray. A really splendid day it was, Edgar affirmed, when he had managed, at the cost of three-quarters of a box of matches, to get his pipe alight.

I said nothing; my heart was too full of

emotion, and my mouth of salt water, to allow of my saying what sort of day I considered it to be. The lines were streaming in our wake, each with a cast of twenty hooks artfully baited with bits of old white kid gloves; and it soon became apparent that the mackerel were as ambitious to secure these dainties as is the judge on circuit in a dull assize town. My husband and the boatman were kept busy hauling in the heavily laden lines, and I was kept busy avoiding the effects of the flipping and the flapping of the scores of fish that were brought aboard.

But after an hour or two of this form of pleasure-sailing, the boatman began to get uneasy about the weather. I had been so thoroughly uneasy all the morning, a little extra did not matter.

"Rot!" said Edgar. "We're doing all right on this course. Oh, the tide? What does it matter about the tide? What does it matter if we can't weather the point coming back? Can't we wait for the next tide?"

I shuddered, but the boatman said: "All right, sir, as you wish."

At the end of another half-hour, however, I think that even my husband had enough of it. He put the boat about, and steered close-hauled for the point round which we had come, running before the wind. The boatman shook his head. Though the sails were full, yet the force of the tidal current was carrying us back.

"We'll make it in a couple of tacks," said Edgar, letting her away a point or two. But again the boatman shook the dewdrops from his mane and rubbed the diamond from his nose by the aid of his jersey sleeve.

"By Jeremiah, this tide's a caution!" remarked my husband at the tiller. "We'll never thrash far enough to wind'ard to clear the point."

"Oh, aye, sir—about moonrise, or thereabouts," said the sarcastic boatman.

"What's to be done?" asked Edgar. "It's not likely that we're going to be here till moonrise. What's to be done?"

"Nothing but a tug'll fetch us round that

point before the turn o' the tide," replied the man.

"I'd sooner get out and walk," said my husband, with gloomy facetiousness.

"And that's just what we can do," I cried, under the inspiration of a sudden thought. "Why should we bother ourselves trying to make for Sandycliffe? Why not run for Boatswain Cove, and let us land there and walk back to Sandycliffe—it's only a matter of three miles?"

"Why not, indeed?" said Edgar, considering the matter. "By Jeremiah, that's what we'll do? You're a born navigator, Peggy. Stand by that jib, Noah. Over she goes! Helm's a-lee!"

I could have wept for joy as the mainsheets were slackened away, only I thought that there was enough salt water about, so refrained. But over the boom went, and we went slamming along with the tide and the wind astern.

Boatswain Cove was a tiny natural harbour about two miles along that part of the coast which was now to the lee of the point, and I knew that we could easily run the boat into that place of shelter, and walk across the country back to Sandycliffe, leaving Noah, the boatman, to take advantage of the turn of the tide to clear the point "about moon-rise," as he had said.

This programme we carried out to the letter. We ran the boat into the cove, and I shook off the dust—well, not exactly, but I said: "If ever you catch me going mackerel streaming in a fresh wind again," etc., etc.

I must admit, however, that when once we found ourselves on a road which we were assured by Noah would carry us to Sandycliffe, if only we took the right turns at the right places, the walk was quite delightful. It was a lovely road, running between the lowest of the downs, on the one hand, and an undulating country of yellow grain, with here and there a beautifully wooded valley in miniature, on the other. We had left the sea and its sounds behind us, with our mackerel and oilskins, and, at the end of a mile, I found that I could eat my sandwiches with relish.

It was at the end of our second mile that we came upon Laughton Place. A more incongruous incident of the landscape than that dirty white board with the words, "To be Let or Sold, Unfurnished," on its face, as it leant over the old flint wall beside the entrance gates, could not be imagined. I commented bitterly on such a blot upon the scene. It was like a piece of stamp-paper

gummed on to a picture by David Cox, I complained to Edgar, and I urged him in jest to remove it and throw it into the ditch.

"There's only one way by which it can be legitimately removed," said he, "and that is by buying the place."

"Then buy it!" I cried, pointing melodramatically to the gates.

"Oh, certainly!" said he, pulling out a handful of loose coins. "How much shall we say? Three, six, eight, ten, twelve-and-six and four pennies. I think we'd better have a couple of them. Do you see any more estates on the horizon? If so, let me know."

We laughed together, and he suggested strolling up the drive to see what the house was like, as we had no need to hurry on our way. We found that the avenue was not more than a quarter of a mile long, and at the end we were facing a lovely old Tudor house, with many gables and quaint "additions," with stone slab roofs, overgrown with olive-green moss. There was an old-world garden in the distance, and a splendid oak in the centre of the curve of the drive.

"The loveliest house I ever saw, only we should never get servants to stay on," said I, speaking out of the fulness of my experience as the daughter of an inaccessible rectory.

"Then we needn't go in," said Edgar, still jesting in his own way.

But we were bound to go in now, for the hall door was opened, and an ancient caretaker (male) appeared, taking off his hat politely, and we were forced to brazen it out rather than be taken for trespassers.

"Oh, yes, sir, it's for sale, but it has been let on and off for ten or a dozen years," said the man. "You haven't a card from Mr. Blaber, sir? Ah, never mind; I'll show you through, if you come this way."

We went that way, Edgar winking at me, and we found ourselves wandering through empty panelled rooms and polished oak corridors for the next hour.

The house took us in its arms, so to speak, from the first. Of course, the kitchen offices, the scullery, larder, store-room, laundry, wood-room and coal-room, were too capacious, but the rest of the house seemed to me to be perfect, and I said so. There was the plant for a scheme of lighting, and quite a number of modern conveniences. We were under the impression that the place was miles away from anywhere, but we learned that it was really not more than ten minutes' walk from

Longhurst, quite a large enough village to be called a town (as it sometimes was), and an hour's walk (as we found) from Sandycliffe.

"Great Jeremiah!" cried Edgar, as we got upon the road once more. "I actually feel inclined to carry out our jest and buy the place."

"Nonsense!" said I. "Do you mean to say that you'd give up London?"

"Why not?" he asked. "I'm tired of London. So are you—so are the kiddies. But I'm afraid they'll ask too much for that place behind."

"We'll see when we interview Mr. Blaber, the agent," said I.

And we did see. The sum asked for the freehold was so moderate that my husband immediately inquired if anything was the matter with the house.

"Nothing, except a right of way dispute," said the agent. "The people say that they have enjoyed the right to cross the park below the warren, and this dispute has interfered with the sale more than once."

"Let them keep their precious right of way, and be hanged to them!" said Edgar. "I don't mind anything short of a battery of artillery crossing by the warrens."

He bought the place, and we were settled down in it within four months, having sold the remainder of our London lease for a great deal more than we expected to get for it.

The best of the deal was, in my estimation, that I could at last display my lovely old furniture to advantage, the panelled rooms of Laughton Place suiting it admirably. In my husband's eyes I knew that the best of the deal was the chance that it gave him of indulging in his hobby. There was no better deep-sea fishing than was to be found off the coast, and there was no more convenient or safer place for keeping a boat than Boatswain Cove.

Nearly all the rooms on the upper floor were panelled. Our bedroom, with a long dressing-room opening off it, was an ideal apartment, lined as it was with the oak linen-fold panels, and the room which we assigned to our elder child, Rosamund—her age was eight—was equally characteristic of Tudor days. It was almost square, and at one side, opposite the mullioned window, there was a door leading to quite a spacious closet—what was called a "cabinet" in the Tudor days. It was in such a small apartment that Mary of Scotland was sitting when Rizzio (corrupted by the Scots to Rizzio) was murdered. My dear little girl was delighted with her

room, and before we were in the house a month, she had turned the "cabinet" into a doll's house on a heroic scale, with stabling and loose boxes. Her governess's room was at the end of the same corridor.

I had just returned from a three days' visit to my brother in Surrey—we were entering upon our third month at Laughton Place—when, on hurrying to her room to say "Good night" to my Rosamund, I found Miss Dean (Miss Dean was the name of the governess) reproving her and telling her not to talk nonsense, but to go asleep. I asked what was the matter, and Miss Dean said that one of the pictures in Rosamund's new story-book had made such an impression on her, that she had been chattering some nonsense about the lady in the picture having come to see her the previous night, and she had asked Miss Dean, after saying "Good night," if she thought the lady would come again.

"Oh, it's nonsense, of course," said the child—"it's nonsense to you; but she did come, and I saw her, mummy."

"I hope you were polite to her, my dear," said I. "Mind you say 'Thank you,' if she gives you anything, and don't bore her with questions."

"Oh, mummy, I think I know how to behave," said Rosamund, in the tone of the child who considers herself quite grown-up, and feels hurt at being reminded to say "Please" or "Thank you."

"I am sure you do," said I. "And the best way for you to behave just now is to go asleep as soon as you can."

I could see that she was slightly hurt at my tone, but knowing that her governess had told her that she had been talking nonsense, I could do nothing but support the authority that had made such a pronouncement. "Good night, my darling," I added, by way of rubbing down any suspicion of previous harshness. "Good night, and don't trouble yourself about any lady in a picture or out of a picture."

When Miss Dean and I were alone, I asked what the child had been saying, and the governess replied that Rosamund had said to her sister Ruth, when looking at the new story-book, that one particular lady in a picture had come to see her the night before, and had talked to her in her room.

I laughed, saying—

"She is an imaginative little creature. She has evidently taken a great fancy to the lady in the picture, and the result is that she has been dreaming of her."

I thought nothing more of the matter, and the child made no reference to it the next day or the day following. But when I was going to my room on that night, I fancied, on passing the corridor at the head of the stairs, that I heard the sound of voices coming from Rosamund's room. I listened outside the door, and was able to make out some words spoken in her natural voice, apparently in reply to a question put to her by someone. Of course, my first thought was that Miss Dean was with her; but I saw that Miss Dean's door was shut, and I felt sure that, if she had gone to Rosamund at that hour of the night, she would have left her door ajar. I took a few steps up the corridor and tested the door. It was locked.

I immediately entered the child's room, and, by the aid of the light that came from the corridor jet, I saw her sitting on the step of the cabinet—the floor was about six inches higher than that of the bedroom—and in her hand was a handkerchief at which she was working with a needle threaded with silk.

"My dear child," I said, "what are you doing out of your bed at this hour? You should have been asleep long ago. This is no time for you to be among your dolls."

"Oh, mummy," she said, "she is so nice—she has been so kind!"

"Who has been so kind, my dear?" I asked her.

"The lady. Oh, I forgot; you told me it was all nonsense," she said.

"Where is the lady? I can see no lady," said I.

She glanced around.

"She must have gone away. But she was here just now," cried the child. "Oh, yes; she told me such a nice story about another little girl who had learned to work things—flowers and things—and she began to teach me how to do it." She held up the handkerchief. It had several stitches of quite fine embroidery, I could see, faint though the light was.

"Do, like a good child, get back into your bed," said I. "If anyone was here with you before I entered the room, she would be here still; but there's no one here, as you see—no one but your mummy."

"But she was here," persisted the child—"she was here. The story was of a little girl who got lost and never was found again. Poor little girl!"

"Is that the story in the picture-book—the one with the lady?" I asked her.

"Oh, no! That is a story of a lady who was proud and haughty, and one day she met a poor man who was good, and she didn't really know that he was the prince, so he didn't love her because she was proud to him, and told him to go away, or she would beat him. Good night, mummy. Please don't tell Miss Dean; she'd be mad. We always speak low, for fear Miss Dean may hear us."

"I will say nothing to Miss Dean; but you must promise me not to get out of bed again, darling."

"Must I promise?"

"You must. You will catch a dreadful cold, if you do, and give us a great deal of trouble nursing you."

She hesitated, but at last said—

"All right, mummy, I promise."

I left her, but it was a long time before I managed to go asleep.

I looked up the picture in her story-book that had made so strong an impression upon her, and found that it was an illustration to one of Hans Andersen's charming tales, and the lady was in the costume of the Stuart period. I did not think that there was anything in the picture to impress a child, or anyone else, for that matter; but I knew how funny is a child's imagination—how it may be impressed by a doll of the most mediocre attractions, while another that is a dream of loveliness is allowed to remain, staring in astonishment at being neglected, on the nursery floor.

But it seemed that I had underrated the powers of the picture, for that very night, coming out of my room after dressing for dinner, I raised the curtain of the window at the end of the corridor, to see if the rain that had been threatening all day had begun. The moment I raised the curtain I saw my own reflection in the blackness of the night for one instant, and the next a shadowy thing—it was like the reflection of a filmy piece of lace—moved quickly behind my own reflection in the blackness, and vanished, but in that second it seemed to me that I was looking at the lady of the picture. Of course I started, turning round as one would turn automatically on seeing reflected behind one's face in a glass an unexpected figure.

The corridor was empty.

There was not even a print or a blind that could possibly be reflected in the black background beyond the glass of the window.

I began to think that the picture must possess some merit beyond my power of



“‘But she did come, and I saw her, mummy.’”



recognition when it could so impress both my little girl and myself.

I listened again that night, on going to bed, but I heard no sound coming from Rosamund's room.

The next night, however, Miss Dean rushed into my room trembling and with an ashen face. I was resting on my sofa before dressing—the first gong had not sounded for dinner—and she stood before me breathing hard, with both her hands pressed to her side.

"What on earth's the matter?" I asked.

She gasped. "Several moments had passed before she was able to speak.

"I saw it!" she whispered. "Something—I don't know what—in old-fashioned dress—only for a second—but enough—long enough!"

She sank down on the sofa, and I snatched up my bottle of sal-volatile from the dressing-table and gave it to her.

Of course, when she had partly recovered from the effects of her shock, I tried to make light of what she supposed she had seen.

"You have been looking at the picture in that book, and it got upon your nerves, as it did upon mine and upon Rosamund's," said I. "You know we were reading that article in the magazine about the image being reflected from within instead of from without—that's how people fancy they see things."

"Oh," she whispered, shaking her head, "I saw it—I saw it!"

"Of course you did," I insisted, "but it was from within—thrown upon the mirror of the eye from the brain—something like that—you recollect the article."

She shook her head once more.

"I saw it," she said again, and that was the sole response that I could get from her.

My maid then entered, and after seeing Miss Dean safely, but trembling, into her room, I returned to my own to dress for dinner; and when I was ready, I tapped at her door, and we went downstairs together.

We passed a very unquiet night. I longed for Edgar's return; he had gone to London for a week. In his absence, I thought I might venture to ask Miss Dean to share my room for the night, and she jumped at the offer. I begged her not to say anything to the servants or to my husband in regard to the apparition, assuming that it was an apparition. I knew that the chances were that the exact physical conditions which imposed upon us the seeing of that thing might never again so coincide as to produce the same effect; and it seemed

that my reasoning on this point was correct, for, after the return of Edgar the next day, and for several weeks to come, there was no recurrence of the phenomenon—if it was a phenomenon—and Miss Dean seemed to have forgotten all about it, when one night, on my way to bed, I was startled by hearing a loud laugh coming from Rosamund's room.

I ran up the few remaining steps of the staircase, and found the child sitting up in bed, still laughing.

"Oh, mummy, you mustn't be angry with me," she said, putting her arms about my neck when I questioned her. "You can't be angry, because I didn't get out of bed—I promised not. But she was very funny to-night; she made me laugh."

"Who made you laugh, child?" I asked.

"The lady—the nice lady," she replied.

"Oh, she has come often, and she has always been so nice. She has more stories than the story-books—better, too! If you stay with me, maybe she'll come back. But she never stays long—that's the worst of it. And she's very fond of me, and she says she'll take care of me, and I'm sure she will. I always sleep so much better when she has been here, and I never have those bad dreams about black faces looking at me—the sort that I had before."

"That is very nice, dear," said I. "I hope you will sleep well to-night."

"I'm sure of it," said she. "She always tells me that I must sleep well, and, when she tells me, somehow I do it. Good night, mummy dear. She was very funny; that's why I laughed."

I went to bed that night, and the next day I got Rosamund's bed brought out of that room into the one in which her sister slept, opening off the night nursery. I said that I rather fancied the other room had a musty smell.

I thought it rather strange that the child should make no protest on being deprived of the independence of an apartment of her own. But she had been in the new room for more than a week before she uttered a complaint.

"I wish you would let me go back to my own room," she said one day, when we had gone out to pick daffodils in the garden.

"Why do you wish that, my dear?" I asked her. "Are you not happy where you are, with Ruth?"

"Oh, yes. But the lady doesn't come to see me in Ruth's room," she replied, "and I liked her so much. Do let me go back, mummy dear!"

What could I say? I could only try to explain to her that her sister's companionship was far nicer for her than that of any lady, no matter how nice the lady had been, and that, for the present, at least, she must make up her mind to remain with Ruth. I meant to try if it would not be possible to turn her attention away from that curious fancy of hers. I knew how an imaginative child can bring herself to look on the creations of her fancy as more real than the real things; but I also knew that, if one goes the right way about it, it is easy enough to prevent her imagination from carrying her too far. Although I was familiar with the newest theory respecting the need for cultivating a child's individuality, my belief in the old system of encouraging only the normal remained unshaken. The fact that my Rosamund's fancies had affected both myself and her governess, causing us to imagine something that was decidedly abnormal, suggested to me the advisability of doing something to check the working of the child's busy brain in one direction at least.

When I told her that she was not to return to her room for the present, she was plainly disappointed; but she was a good little girl, and she did not complain.

A week later, however, I came upon her suddenly in the act of leaving the room that had been hers originally.

"What were you doing there, Rosamund?" I asked her, and she replied, after a little hesitating pause, that she thought she had left the doll's "pram" there, and Ruth wanted it badly.

"Have you been in here often since you went to sleep with Ruth?" I inquired.

Again she hesitated, and looked at me as children found in a fault look at their parents, to see if it is best to tell the truth or a falsehood in reply to a leading question. Apparently her observation of my face reassured her, and she replied—

"I came to-day and yesterday, and no more. But I want to come again, mummy, for she was sad, and cried because I was kept away from her. She is in there now. You can ask her."

I looked into the room, and saw that it was empty.

"Rosamund, I will not have you going about talking such nonsense," I said rather severely. "There is no one in the room, and you must never enter it again without my leave. You must understand that; and if I hear you talking anything more about that lady, I shall be very angry. Now come

with me into the garden. We may be able to find some primroses."

She was, I could see, on the verge of tears, but I soon turned her attention away from her grievance, and she said nothing more about the mysterious lady so long as she was with me. I did not lock the door of the room that day, but before the end of the week I did so, carrying off the key.

It was on the Saturday that the accident occurred. "A splendid day for sea-fishing," Edgar declared after breakfast, and told me cheerily, in the manner of husbands, to come along with him for an hour. Now, the boy who helped in the boat, which Edgar had bought even before we had settled down in the house, was not available this day, so that I was necessary to do the steering, while my husband managed the fishing lines, though I would have given anything to escape the job.

Off I trudged with him, and the little craft being always afloat in Boatswain's Cove, we were spared the trouble of launching it, and we were soon scudding out of the bay, close hauled, to get on the long three-fathom patch where the best fishing was to be had. A fresh breeze was blowing, but there was not enough wind to compel us to take in a reef of the mainsail. Well, we reached the patch and threw out the grapple, and enjoyed—one of us, at any rate—a good hour and a half among the plaice and soles. We caught as many as would serve us for a couple of days at home, and then Edgar hauled in the grapple, and, with some trifling help from me, set the mainsail. He took the tiller, slackened away the sheets, and the boom went out as the sail began to draw, and we ran before the wind shorewards.

I really do not know quite how it happened. Edgar was at the tiller, and I was sitting on the coaming of the little hatch, when the mainsail jibed suddenly and I still think unaccountably, for the sail was full, and Edgar could steer so as to keep it full; but, anyhow, there was a jibe, the boom swung across, and, catching me on the left shoulder, tossed me, turning a complete somersault, into the sea.

I went under the water, but only for a moment. I got my head up, and saw the boat going about, not more than twenty yards away, when down I felt myself pulled again. I had a sensation of choking with salt water, and tried to swim to the surface. I tried and tried, but my dress, saturated as it was, seemed to be the weight of a ton holding me back. But still I tried and tried, and—nothing else. I had an agreeable sense of

being all right, having no need to struggle any more, and then came a strange blank. I was not in the midst of any blackness, only a peculiar greyness, something like that of a September mist, and through this space I was moving swiftly and silently, not flying, but simply moving, as a thistledown floats through the air when a steady breeze is blowing. I seemed to go on and on for a long time, and then I had a dreamy sense of complete rest, a sense of hovering—that is the only way I can put the sensation, speaking from my recollection of it. The next impression that I had was of being once again at the corridor window, and looking out as before into blackness. But this time, instead of seeing my own reflection, I was conscious of seeing the pale, gentle face of a lady close to my own face, and of hearing her say—

“Why have you been so unkind as to take away your dear little girl from me? What harm have I ever done to her that you should shut her out from me? Surely you do not grudge the love which she had for me, and which she still has for me? You need not fear that she will continue to love me. They all go away from me—all that I have ever loved and that have ever loved me—they go away from me as my own little damsel went away and got lost in the wood, so that I never saw her again. Your child is just as old as mine was, and cannot you believe how great a consolation to me it was to be with her and talk to her as I was used to talk to my own darling? And now you have shut her out from me, and I wander to and fro, feeling in regard to her what I felt in regard to my own lost dear. But you will let her come back, will you not? It may be that some day I shall be able to show you how good a friend to her I am.”

I remember now, as one remembers an incident in a dream long past, trying to speak to her, but finding that I could do no more than gasp. And then came a nightmare sense of pain in struggling to speak—struggling and struggling and struggling, and with the pain ever increasing, and added to it the sense of a horrible, jarring sound, growing louder and louder about me, crashing in upon the drums of my ears with an unendurable din. I felt that I was being whirled through the shrieking air, when there came the crash as of a bomb, and then . . .

The awful sounds seemed to wane away, and I became aware of ordinary voices

around me—my husband’s voice saying “Thank Heaven!” and other men’s voices, varying in tone. It was some time, however, before I became conscious of the fact that someone was working my arms in a strange way, raising them up from the elbow and then pressing them close to my ribs. Someone was doing this to me with rhythmic regularity, and the effect of it was to make me gasp. I couldn’t see the sense of it at first, but then I began to puzzle out in my mind where I had experienced it before. It was a long time before I managed to connect the operation with the classes I had attended years ago—“First Aid” classes, they were termed, and they were held under the auspices of the Association of St. John. I then knew that I was being subjected to the ordinary course for the resuscitation of the drowned—or the nearly drowned; and when I became aware of this, I had no difficulty in opening my eyes.

I was lying on a small bed in a commonplace room. There was a cheap lithograph of the King on the wall, and a little further on another of Lord Charles Beresford, while just before me there was a photograph of a man-of-war. Three or four people were about the bed—a woman who looked like a washerwoman, my husband in his shirt-sleeves, the doctor from the village, and two men in the “togs” of a man-of-war.

Only for a few minutes did I wonder where I was and what was meant by these people about me. In a short time I recollected everything—or nearly everything—that had happened. I knew that I had been rescued from the waves, and that I was in one of the coastguards’ houses, where the process of my resuscitation had just been successfully carried out.

I smiled, and I heard my husband say: “Thank Heaven!”

“Keep at it for another five minutes; I’m afraid of a relapse,” said the doctor to the man who was working with my arms.

“All right, sir; but you needn’t fear that. No, she won’t relapse; I know ‘em. This ‘ere’s my sixteenth.”

The coastguardsman was right; I did not “relapse.” In an hour I was able to take some nourishment, and then I went asleep and awoke for some more. So I went on, sleeping and nourishing for another twenty-four hours, when the doctor said I might be brought home, and home I was brought.

I was sitting up in my chair three days later, when Edgar gave me some of the details of my rescue. He had put the boat

about, and let the mainsail down with a run when drifting over the place where I had sunk. But even then he had not been foolish enough to jump overboard until he had seen that the coastguards had manned their lightest boat and were pulling out to us. He had dived for me and brought me

And the petty officer encouraged them—we all took our turn—but I tell you that for three hours your heart had ceased to beat. There was not the least sign of living about you; I tell you that you were dead.”

“And I believe you, my dear,” I managed to say. “I knew that I was dead, but now



“In the most distant summer-house, fast asleep.”

to the surface, and managed to support me until the boat reached us and lifted us over the side.

“You were dead, Peggy,” said he. “You were as dead as anyone ever was. The doctor said so half an hour later, when he came to us in the house. He shook his head and said ‘No use,’ when I begged the men to continue the work of resuscitation.

I’m alive, and ready for some more of that beef-tea.”

In less than a week I was able to leave my chair, but even before I was convalescent I had given instructions for Rosamund to be put back into her room. She came to me the day after with bright eyes and glowing cheeks.

“Thank you, dearest mummy,” she said,

with her arms about my neck. "Thank you. She was with me last night, and told me that you had come to her and that she had spoken to you. I was glad, for now I knew you would know that she wasn't all nonsense, but as nice as anything."

"Yes, dear," I said, "I saw her and she spoke to me."

"Had you far to go to see her, mummy dear?" she asked me.

"Very far—very far—almost as far as anyone can go, my child," said I.

"But you have come back, dear old mummy, and now we'll all be so happy!" she cried.

\* \* \* \* \*

I never questioned her further respecting her lady, and I think she became rather shy of conversing about her. Once again, however, did she refer to her in reply to my inquiry. It was during the next autumn that a cinematograph entertainment was announced to take place at Mallingsford, nine miles away, and I had bought tickets for the children and their governess. They were to drive to Sandycliffe and take the train there at 6.30, so that they would arrive at seven, in time for the entertainment. The pony-cart was at the door at the hour for which it was ordered, and Ruth and Miss Dean were ready to leave the house. They called for Rosamund, but she did not respond. They hurried to her room, but failed to find her there. All through the house they searched for her, but with no result, and by this time it was too late to think of going to Sandycliffe in time to catch the train. The pony-cart was sent back to the stables, and Miss Dean and several of the servants made up a party to go through the grounds in search of

the child. They found her, I was told, on my return from the rectory, where I had been visiting, in the most distant summer-house, fast asleep.

Miss Dean expected me, I am sure, to say some very firm words to Rosamund for having spoiled her sister's pleasure, leaving her own out of the question altogether, and in the presence of the governess I did say that I was surprised that any little girl of mine could be so thoughtless. But when we were alone, I asked her why she went to that particular summer-house, so far away, at that hour, and she replied, after some hesitation—

"It was she who came to me, mummy, and told me to go at once to that summer-house and wait there until someone found me, so I went. I had to go, of course, mummy dear."

"Of course, dear," I assented. But the truth was that I was too greatly puzzled to know exactly what to say or what to think at that moment.

I knew what to think the next morning, however, when all the country was talking of the terrible catastrophe which had occurred at the hall in Mallingsford where the cinematograph entertainment had taken place. A film had caught fire and there had been an explosion. In a moment an alarm of fire had caused a stampede to the door, and in the narrow passage, and on the still narrower stairs, eleven children had been crushed to death and more than thirty badly injured.

"What a Providential escape!" cried Miss Dean.

"Yes," said I, "Rosamund has a friend who is on that side."

"What side?" inquired Miss Dean, with a puzzled expression on her face.

"The side of Providence," said I.

## HEART OF GOLD.

"Thou who passest on the path, if haply thou dost mark this monument, laugh not, I pray thee, though it is a dog's grave; tears fell for me, and the dust was heaped above me by a master's hands . . ."—*Greek Anthology.*

**THEY'VE** all gone out a-walking  
This day of blue and gold,  
But you stay here behind with me  
Just as of old.

Just as of old—and yet not so—  
I wander as I will  
About the grassy garden-plot,  
But you lie still.

You with the little eager feet,  
The eyes of tender brown,  
The eyes and feet that followed me  
Aye up and down.

The sward lies smooth above you,  
Your gentle heart is cold,  
And mine seems like to break for you,  
Dear Heart of Gold.

ROSAMUND MARRIOTT WATSON.

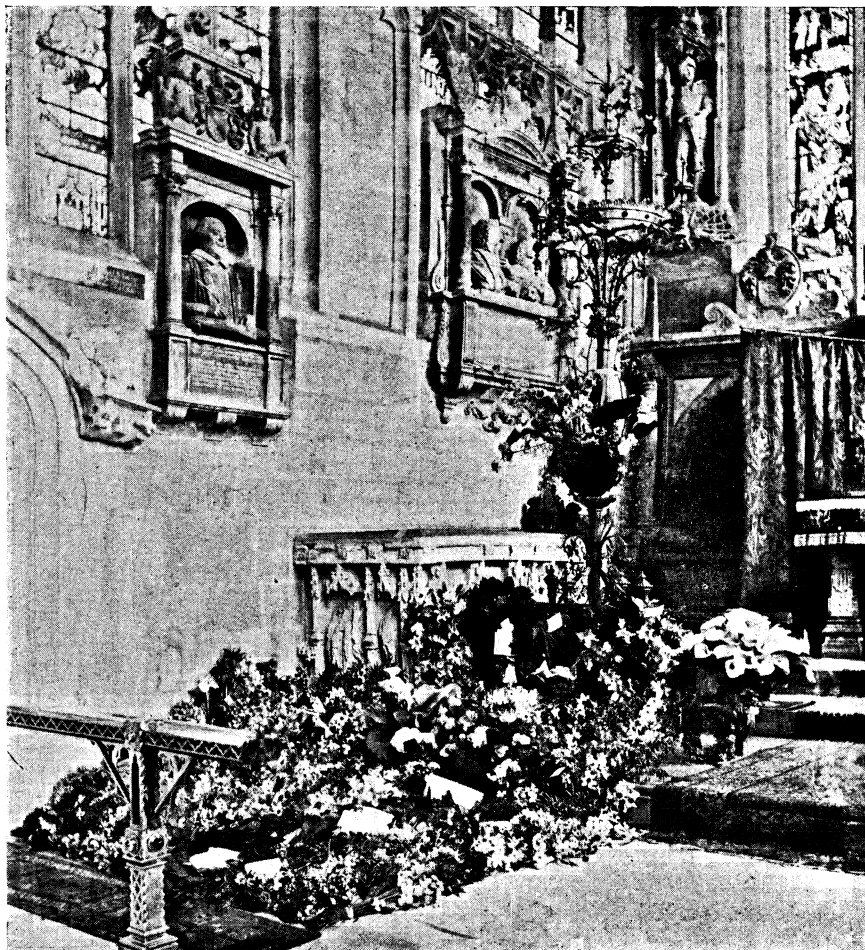


Photo by]

[Douglas McNeill, Stratford-on-Avon.

SHAKESPEARE'S TOMB GARLANDED WITH FLOWERS ON APRIL 23.

## THE SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL.

### PLAYS AND PLAYERS AT STRATFORD-ON-AVON.

SINCE last year's commemoration of Shakespeare's genius in his native town, several remarkably interesting sidelights upon the personality of the poet have been revealed to the world for the first time by the diligent researches of such constant students of the past as Dr. Wallace and Mrs. Carmichael Stopes, but within the same period less has been seen of Shakespeare's work in the current traffic of the London stage than for many a past twelve-month.

Mr. Lewis Waller, who had previously

reappeared in the rôle of Hotspur in Mr. F. R. Benson's production of "Henry IV., Part I.," at Stratford-on-Avon, gave two *matinées* of that play in London. Sir Herbert Tree, at midsummer, presented a very notable series of revivals of Shakespearean plays, including selections both from his own repertoire and from those of Mr. and Mrs. F. R. Benson and of Mr. Arthur Bouchier and Miss Violet Vanbrugh. Then, in the autumn, came Mr. Herbert Trench's picturesque production of "King Lear," a tragedy too terrible ever to achieve a "long





Photo by]

[Ellis &amp; Watery.

MR. JAMES CAREW AS SHYLOCK.

run" in the theatre, it would seem, and thereafter, save for a few costume recitals by Mr. Charles Fry and his comrades, and the occasional dramatic readings of the British Empire Shakespeare Society, the poet's work was conspicuous only by its absence from the stage of the metropolis until Mr. Arthur Phillips presented his revival of "The Merchant of Venice" at the Court Theatre last February. Even Mr. Benson disappointed his London audience this spring by transferring his usual repertoire season at the Coronet Theatre to the Irish capital, whereby we lost his customary repetitions of the many plays seldom produced under any other management.

Thus, despite rumours of national endowment that have still to materialise, the thoughts of those playgoers who have for many years relied chiefly upon Shakespeare's own little town for the performance of any considerable number of his plays, are turned once more towards the annual Festival at Stratford, for which a programme even

longer and more varied than in any former year is now announced. Simultaneously one is glad to learn that the London Festival, organised by Sir Herbert Tree, is to begin on Easter Monday and be continued for a period of five weeks, with the co-operation of other leading players identified with Shakespearian work, on somewhat the same system of varied casts of players for a lengthy list of plays as has for some years obtained at the Stratford-on-Avon Festival. Details of these performances are not yet announced, but playgoers can with confidence count upon the lavish fulfilment of any promise of Sir Herbert Tree's.

Meantime, since the yearly more cosmopolitan audience that musters at the Memorial Theatre is a scattered one, and last year's audiences reached a total of over fourteen thousand, the information issued to it each year is completed farther in advance than the



Photo by]

[Foulsham &amp; Banfield.

MISS NORA LANCASTER AS ROSALIND.



MISS ELLEN TERRY AS PORTIA.

*Photograph by Window & Grove.*



*Photo by]*

*[Buckley, Vandyke Studio, Cork.*

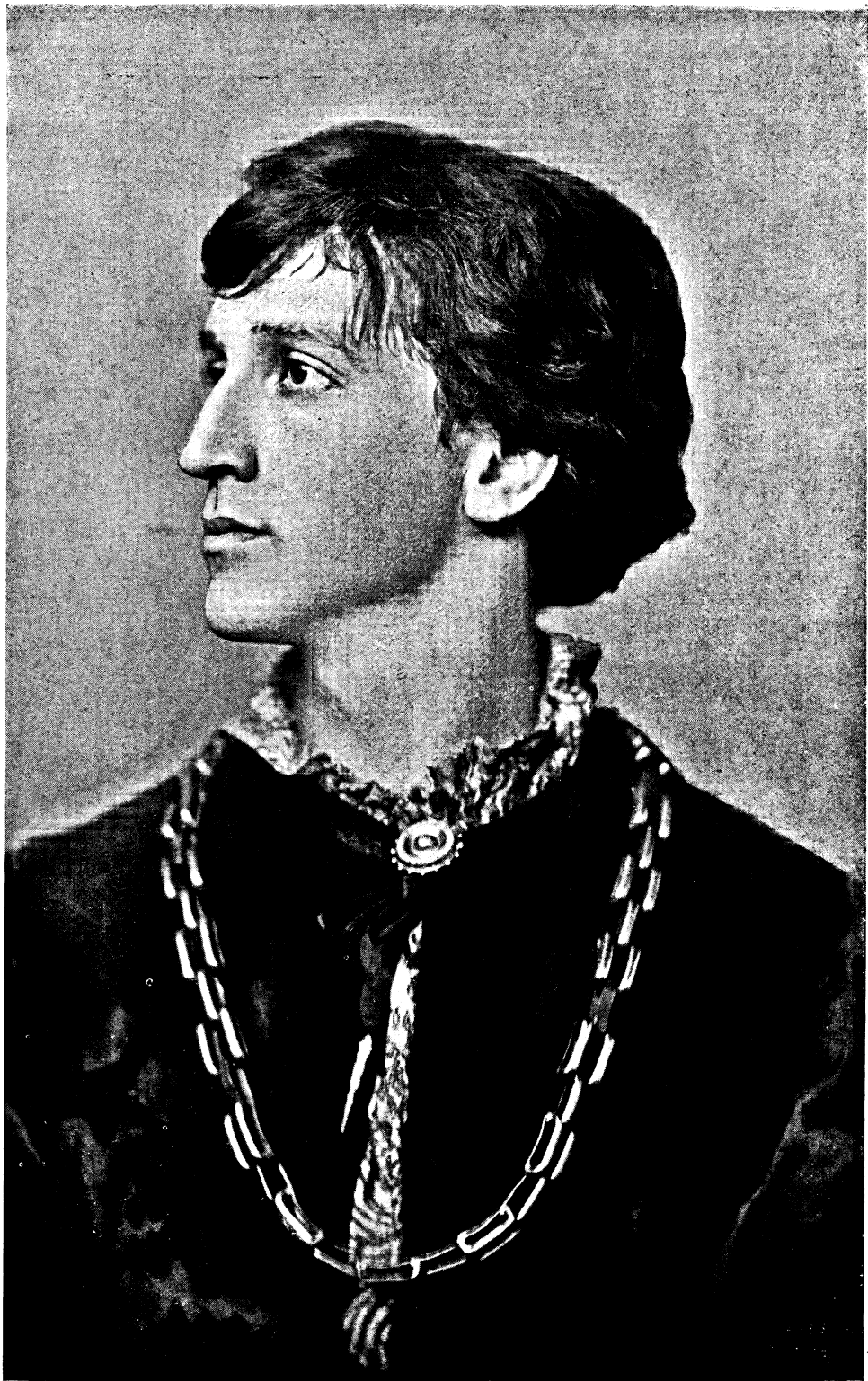
MRS. BENSON, WHO PLAYS JULIA IN "THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA."

plans of a London theatre can be fixed beyond alteration. Thus we have already the full prospectus of the coming celebration in the poet's native town, to give the world assurance of the infinite variety of "Tragedy, Comedy, History, Pastoral," which will mark the latest of these happily-inspired local celebrations of the world's greatest

artist in words, the man of whom Carlyle finely wrote—

"The finest human figure, as I apprehend, that Nature has hitherto seen fit to make of our widely-diffused Teutonic clay. Saxon, Norman, Celt, or Sarmat, I find no human soul so beautiful these fifteen hundred known years—our supreme, modern European man!"

In continuance of the Festival custom of



MR. F. R. BENSON, WHO PLAYS HENRY V.

*Photograph by Bassano.*

making a special revival at the gala performance on St. George's Day—the poet's reputed birthday, and certainly the date of his death—of some play not recently seen upon the stage, the choice has this year fallen upon "The Two Gentlemen of Verona." Unlike the long series of plays which have been, one by one, restored to the modern stage on this occasion, after a long period of neglect in the theatre, "The Two Gentlemen of Verona" has suffered less eclipse as an acting play in London than at Stratford. For within the past fifteen years it has twice been revived for a run, first at Daly's Theatre, with Miss Ada Rehan as Julia, and more recently at the Court, with Mr. J. H. Leigh as the Duke of Milan, Miss Thyrza Norman as Julia, and Mr. Granville Barker as Launce. In the present revival Mr. Benson plays the Duke, the "two gentlemen" are represented by Mr. Murray Carrington and Mr. Eric Maxon, with Mrs. Benson as Julia and Miss Nora Lancaster as Silvia. Mr. H. O. Nicholson is the Launce, and Mr. Harry Caine the



Photo by]

[Lafayette, Dublin.

MRS. BENSON AS DOLL IN "HENRY IV.—PART II."



Photo by]

[Foulsham &amp; Banfield.

MR. A. E. GEORGE AS HENRY IV.

Speed. The play was last presented at Stratford in 1900 by that fine actor of the older school, the late Mr. Osmund Tearle, who conducted the Festival that year, while Mr. and Mrs. Benson and their company were engaged in London with their very poetical production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" at the Globe Theatre. The play is thus added to the Benson repertoire for the first time, having hitherto remained one of the only five plays of Shakespeare not included in the fine record of the company's career. From the decision to make a special revival of a play which has at least once before been included in the work of the Memorial Theatre, instead of adding one of the four remaining plays never produced there at all, one assumes that the Memorial Council still hesitates





MRS. BENSON AS LADY MACBETH.

*Photograph by L. Caswall Smith.*





THE TWO HAMLETS OF THIS YEAR'S FESTIVAL—SIR HERBERT BEERHOHM TREE.  
*Photograph by W. & D. Downey.*



THE TWO HAMLETS OF THIS YEAR'S FESTIVAL—MR. MARTIN HARVEY, WITH MISS DE SILVA AS OPHELIA. *Photograph by Ellis & Walery.*



*Photo by* [Charles & Russell, Belfast.

MR. ERIC MAXON AS RICHMOND.



*Photo by* [Norman Moody, Southsea.

MR. EDWARD HARRISON AS HUBERT.

to adventure upon either "Troilus and Cressida," "Titus Andronicus," or "All's Well that Ends Well." Certainly there are difficulties to overcome in making either of these plays quite suitable for modern pre-

sentation; but two of them were acted by Phelps, in the course of his Sadlers' Wells management, and in recent times "Troilus and Cressida" has been effectively given as a costume recital by Mr. Charles Fry, and one



*Photo by* [Baines & Co., Leeds.

MISS LEAH HANMAN AS PUCK.



*Photo by* [Buckley, Cork.

MISS ELINOR AICKIN.



MR. ARTHUR BOURCHIER AND MISS VIOLET VANBRUGH, THE SHYLOCK AND PORTIA  
OF A FORMER FESTIVAL, WHO THIS YEAR PLAY BENEDICK AND BEATRICE.

*Photograph by Ellis & Walery.*





MR. LEWIS WALLER AND MISS WINIFRED EMERY, WHO PLAY BENEDICK AND BEATRICE  
AT THE SECOND PERFORMANCE OF "MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING."

*Photograph by Foulsham & Banfield.*



Photo by] [L. Caswall Smith.

MRS. BENSON AS LADY ANNE IN "RICHARD III."

recalls a very interesting performance of "All's Well that Ends Well" by the Irving Amateur Club, in which the character of Parolles was notably well rendered by Mr. Lewin Mannering.

No fewer than fifteen other plays of Shakespeare, of more importance, and therefore less recondite in interest, are included in the programme, which ranges through the whole gamut of the great literary heritage which we know as his work.

Tragedy is represented in this year's series by two performances of "Hamlet," endowed with that extra interest which has previously been provided by the Festival scheme in the case of other plays, by the presenting of different players, of different personalities and temperaments, in the same play. The Festival playgoer is thus afforded an opportunity for studies in comparative criticism which the conditions of ordinary theatrical management can seldom offer. But, thanks to the cordial co-operation

of many leading players, the Memorial Theatre at Stratford-on-Avon is able to give us the unique experience of seeing Sir Herbert Tree as Hamlet at one performance, with Miss Marie Lohr as Ophelia, Miss Helen Haye as the Queen, Mr. Henry Ainley as Laertes, Mr. Alfred Brydone as the Ghost, Mr. H. O. Nicholson as Polonius, and Mr. Murray Carrington as Horatio; while at the other performance of the same play, in the following week, Mr. Martin Harvey appears as Hamlet, with Miss De Silva as Ophelia, Mr. Charles Glenney as the King, Miss Mary Rorke as the Queen, Mr. Fred Wright as Polonius, and the other characters sustained by the members of Mr. Harvey's own company. And on another date devoted to the "sceptred pall" of Tragedy, "Macbeth" is to be presented, with Mr. F. R. Benson as Macbeth,



Photo by] [L. Caswall Smith.

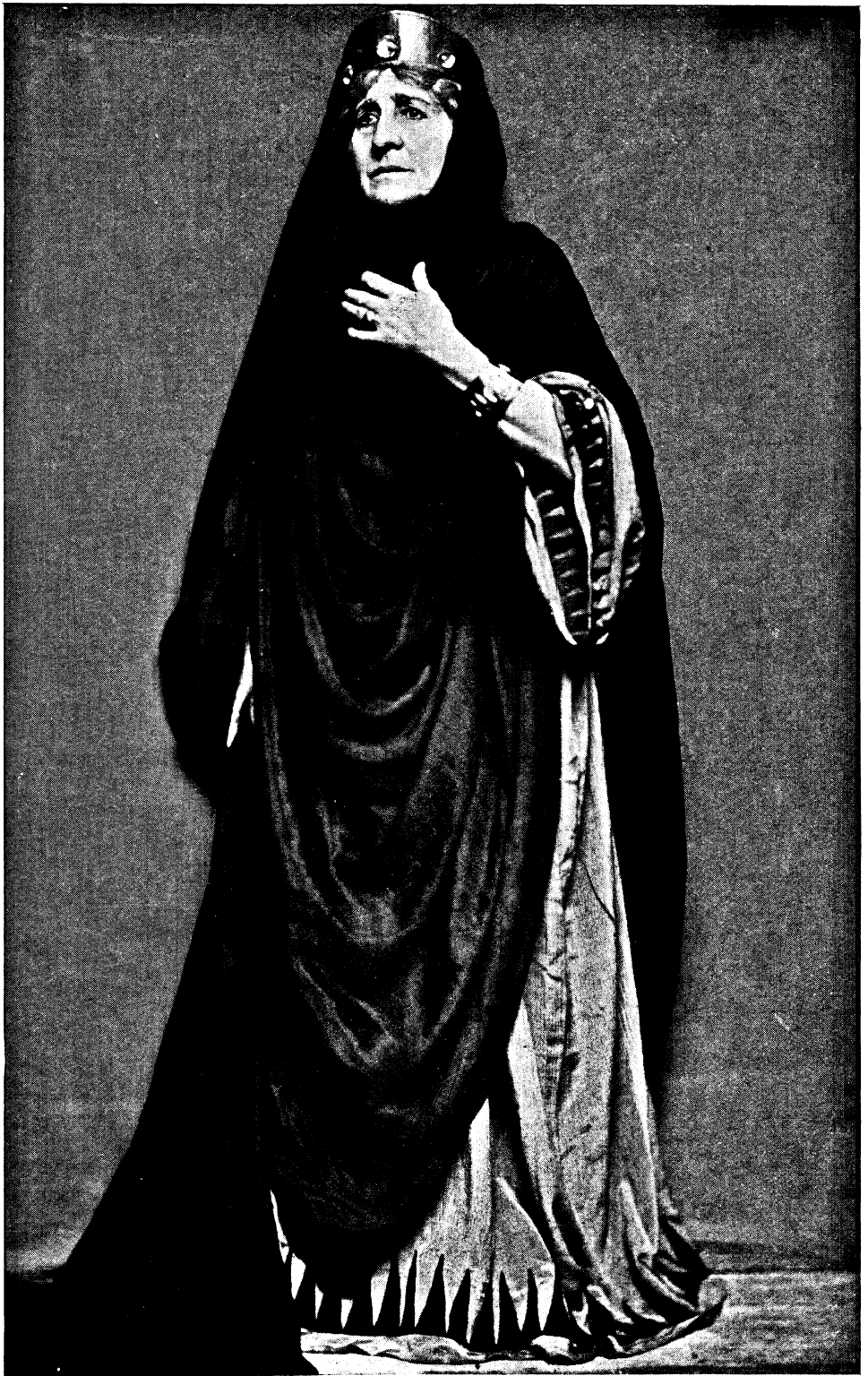
MR. F. R. BENSON AS PETRUCHIO IN "THE TAMING OF THE SHREW."





MR. HENRY AINLEY, WHO PLAYS MARK ANTONY IN "JULIUS CÆSAR."

*Photograph by Ellis & Walery.*



MISS GENEVIEVE WARD, WHO PLAYS VOLUMNIA AND QUEEN MARGARET.

*Photograph by L. Caswall Smith.*



*Photo by]*

*[Johnston & Hoffmann.*

MR. ALFRED BRYDONE  
As the Ghost in "Hamlet."



*Photo by]*

*[Warrington, Liverpool.*

MR. MURRAY CARRINGTON,  
Who plays Valentine in "The Two Gentlemen of Verona."

Mrs. Benson as Lady Macbeth, and Mr. Eric Maxon as Macduff.

The "Tragical Historical," still further to

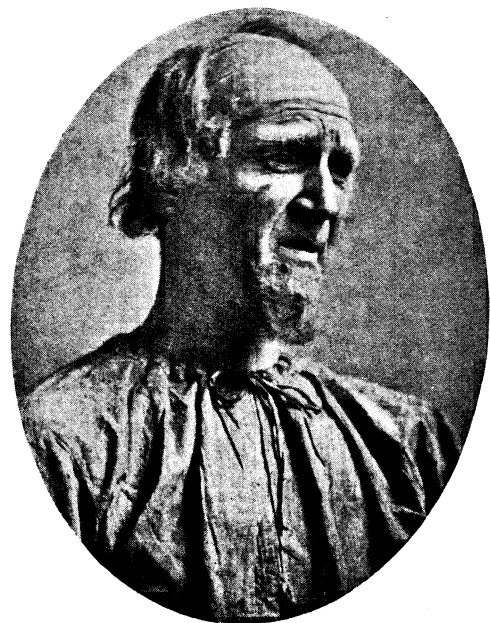
pursue the classification of Polonius, shows us "Coriolanus," with Mr. Benson in the title rôle, and Miss Genevieve Ward as Volumnia,



*Photo by]*

*[Charles & Russell, Belfast.*

MR. HARRY CAINE  
As the Fool in "Twelfth Night."



*Photo by]*

*[Baines & Co., Leeds.*

MR. H. O. NICHOLSON  
As Starveling in "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

and the later Roman play of "Julius Cæsar," with Mr. Benson as Mark Antony at one performance, and Mr. Henry Ainley at another, to the Julius Cæsar of Mr. Guy Rathbone, the Cassius of Mr. Maxon, the Portia of Mrs. Benson, and the Brutus of Mr. Otho Stuart, who thus again returns to his old allegiance as a player well remembered from many former Festivals, as well as a manager responsible for several notable Shakespearian productions on the London stage. The tragic themes from English history are "Richard II.," with Mr. Benson as the hapless king, Miss Nora Lancaster as the Queen, and Mr. Murray Carrington as Bolingbroke, afterwards Henry IV., and "Richard III.," with Mr. Benson as the Duke of Gloucester, Miss Genevieve Ward as Margaret of Anjou, Mrs. Benson as Lady Anne, Mr. Otho Stuart as Clarence, and Mr. Eric Maxon as Richmond, afterwards Henry VII.

History less tragical, though scarcely to be catalogued with the "historical-pastoral," unless by reason of the quaint homeliness of the "Country Justices," Shallow and Silence, or the rustic humours of Falstaff's recruits, is contributed in the seldom-acted "Henry IV., Part II.," an excerpt from Mr. and Mrs. Benson's memorable revivals of the long series of Shakespeare's plays from English history. In this repetition Mr. Alfred Brydone reappears as Henry IV., to the Prince Hal of Mr. Eric Maxon, and the Doll Tearsheet of Mrs. Benson, the Falstaff being Mr. Edward Harrison, in succession to the late Mr. George Weir, whose wonderful personality must ever be missed from the productions with which he was identified for upwards of a quarter of a century. One can never forget the utter pitifulness of his acting in the scene of the old knight's repudiation by the young king. One recalls, too, from a date preceding the discovery of London by the Sicilians, the tavern scenes remarkable for the bold truculence of Mr. Oscar Asche's Pistol, and the vivid realism of Mrs. Benson's Doll, as well as the old-world humours of the Mistress Quickly of that fine Shakespearian actress, the late Miss Alice Denvil.

History of still happier vein is represented by "Henry V.," with Mr. Benson as the reformed madcap prince, who becomes the hero of Agincourt, Mr. Alfred Brydone as the French king, Miss Nora Lancaster as Princess Katharine of Valois, Mr. Nicholson as Fluellen, Mr. Eric Maxon as Pistol, and Miss Elinor Aickin as Dame Quickly, with

her moving speech descriptive of Falstaff's death.

Of Comedy this year's Festival selection is particularly lavish. "The Merchant of Venice" gives us once more the brilliant Portia of Miss Ellen Terry, who reappears in this, perhaps, finest of all her Shakespearian impersonations, to the Shylock of Mr. James Carew, and the Bassanio of Mr. Otho Stuart. "The Winter's Tale," which we may possibly include under the "historical-pastoral" of Polonius's catalogue, is given with a cast including Mr. Benson as Leontes, Mrs. Benson as Hermione, Miss Nora Lancaster as Perdita, Mr. Murray Carrington as Florizel, and Mr. Nicholson as Autolycus. "Much Ado About Nothing" again gives scope for interesting comparisons, for Mr. Arthur Bouchier and Miss Violet Vanbrugh make their first appearance as Benedick and Beatrice at one performance, and at the other the two rôles are interpreted by Mr. Lewis Waller and Miss Winifred Emery, with Mr. A. E. George as Dogberry.

In "The Taming of the Shrew" Mr. and Mrs. Benson are again the representatives of Petruchio and Katharina, and in the "pastoral" of the same mode of classification a new Rosalind and Orlando are to be seen in Miss Nora Lancaster and Mr. Eric Maxon. Mr. and Mrs. Benson, Miss Elinor Aickin, Miss Violet Farebrother, Mr. Alfred Brydone, Mr. Guy Rathbone, Mr. Harry Caine, Mr. Moffat Johnston, and others of the Festival company appear in "The Merry Wives of Windsor," "Twelfth Night," and Beaumont and Fletcher's droll play, "The Knight of the Burning Pestle," which was first revived in modern times in the excellent production by Mr. Philip Carr and his "Mermaid" repertory company.

Comedy also holds the stage on the occasion of an "Old Bensonians'" *matinée*, an interesting innovation to be carried out by a large number of distinguished players who have been enrolled under Mr. and Mrs. Benson's banner in the past, at former Festivals and on many another stage. At this performance many well-known players will support Mr. and Mrs. Benson in scenes from "The Merchant of Venice" and "The Taming of the Shrew," and will also present the rehearsal of the "rude mechanicals," and certain of the other forest scenes of "A Midsummer Night's Dream," together with a couple of scenes from Sheridan's "The School for Scandal."

Thus, after Beaumont and Fletcher, the contemporaries of Shakespeare, comes the

modish satire of Richard Brinsley Sheridan into the programme, and then, *longo intervallo*, the one entirely modern work included, in the form of "The Piper," a new poetical play by Josephine Preston Peabody, to which has been awarded the prize of three hundred pounds offered by a governor of the Memorial Theatre last year for a new play to be produced at this year's Festival. Some three hundred and fifteen plays were sent in for the competition, and after a process of selection by a large committee had been carried through, the award was finally made to this work, which is a new version of "The Pied Piper of Hameln" story, by an American writer hitherto known in this country chiefly by some graceful work in verse and prose in the more important American magazines. The leading parts in the play, which is being elaborately produced with new scenery and incidental music, are to be played by Mr. F. R. Benson and Miss Marion Terry.

Thus, for nearly a month, which is a few days longer than ever before, does the once much-criticised Memorial Theatre become the one playhouse in the world wherein the student of the Elizabethan drama may, within that comparatively brief period, witness performances of no fewer than sixteen of Shakespeare's plays, including several that are seldom given on any other stage, one by Beaumont and Fletcher, and one entirely new poetical drama, of which rumour speaks highly. Thus, once again, as "the sweet o' the year" comes in, does the commemorative stage of Shakespeare's little town, in its setting of green meadows and gardens "painted with delight," supply a local habitation for the golden pomp of work which is to-day one of our greatest national assets. If an experienced Festival-goer were to criticise the exact selection of plays for this year's pageant, it would be but to wonder, and that before the event, whether "heart-easing Mirth," has for once prevailed too fully against the more strenuous ambition that inspired some earlier programmes. "Hamlet" is here, and "Macbeth," but no "King Lear," "Timon of Athens," "Othello," or "Romeo and Juliet," and some, at least, of the historical plays have given place to the best-beloved of the comedies. An interesting sequence of events in our national story can, however, be followed in the consecutive performances of "Richard II.," "Henry IV.,

Part II.," "Henry V.," and "Richard III.," though the omission of "Henry VI." makes too long an interval. Those who saw the still more closely connected series in which Mr. and Mrs. Benson and their comrades presented all but one play in the whole of Shakespeare's long epic in dramatic form, which opens with the trumpet-call of patriotism sounded in "King John," and closes with the prophecy of national success in the last act of "Henry VIII.," will be able to fill in the gaps in the present series in their mind's eye. But it is to be hoped that by next year the whole series may be presented even more completely than at two former Festivals. An instrument of national education of the finest value would be supplied by the more frequent performance of these plays, especially if given, as at Stratford, in their chronological sequence.

But if the preponderance of more familiar plays gives to the playbills a less recondite aspect than of old, that familiarity is, after all, the result which the Memorial Theatre was built to achieve, for, with the exception of the three comparatively unimportant works already mentioned, all those of Shakespeare's plays which were long relegated to the study by all other forms of theatrical management, have now, one by one, been restored to the modern stage at the Memorial Theatre, even while they were still entirely neglected in the theatres of the metropolis.

Moreover, although it does not fall within the financial scheme of the Memorial Theatre to perform the missionary task of sending its productions to other towns, it does nowadays happen that the work contributed to the annual Festival is often repeated in London and the principal provincial cities by the players. And if one may judge from the laudable enterprise in the cause of "repertory" work with which several of our leading actor-managers are now inspired, one may hope that many of the plays which were unknown to any contemporary audience when first revived by Mr. Benson at Stratford-on-Avon will never again be quite as entirely exiled from the British stage. But it is still to the one permanent Shakespearian theatre in the poet's own town that those whom he calls unto himself with ever-increasing appeal must turn to see as many as sixteen of his plays within the span of barely a month's season.



# THE VALUE OF A VOTE.

By FLORA ANNIE STEEL.



There was an old man, a very old man. A *Syyed*—that is, a Mahommedan who claims direct descent from the Prophet; by trade a *Yunâni hakeem*, or physician, according to the Grecian system

introduced to India, doubtless, by Alexander the Great. He had a little sort of shop, close to the principal gate of the city, where he was in touch with all those who, with their ship, the camel, went out or came back from the desert beyond, and with all strangers and sojourners in the land. So all day and every day you might see wearied travellers resting on the hard wooden platform set in a dark archway of which his shop consisted, drinking, out of green glass tumblers, some restorative sherbet of things hot or things cold, things dry or things wet, while he showed dimly in the background, a visionary outline of long grey beard and high white turban. In this way he heard a good deal of what was going on both inside and outside the city, and as he was of the old school of the absolutely loyal, outspoken Mahommedan, who, while he holds our rule to be inferior to that of his own faith, emphatically believes it to be superior to all others, I used often to pause, in riding into or out of the city, for a chat with the old man, seldom without benefit to myself. One morning—I remember it so well—the *gram* fields outside the city were literally drenched with dew, making the fine tufts look like diamond plumes, amongst which the wealth of tiny purple-blue pea blossom showed like a sowing of sapphires—I found him sitting with a troubled look on his high wrinkled forehead, peering through his horn spectacles at a blue printed paper.

A patient was snoring contentedly on the boards, with a hard roly-poly bolster, which made me ache to look at, tucked into the hollow of his neck. Nothing brings home to one the impossibility of any Western judging what is or is not pleasant or

convenient to an Eastern, more than the ordinary rolling-pin, two feet by six inches, stuffed hard with cotton wool, which the latter habitually uses as a pillow. The sight of it makes a Western neck feel stiff.

I recognised the paper at once. We were then in the throes of “local self-government,” and a violent effort was being made to induce this little far-away town, inhabited for the most part by Pathans (exiled these centuries back from northern wilds to the Indian plain), to elect a municipal committee.

I had spent the better part of the day before in explaining to various *Rais'es*, or honourable gentlemen of the city, that no insult was intended by asking them to put themselves up to auction, as it were, by the votes of their fellow-citizens, instead of being discreetly, and as ever, nominated to the office of councillor by those whom it is now fashionable to call the “hated alien.” A few had gravely and dutifully given in to this new and quite incomprehensible fad of the constituted authorities, others had hesitated; but one, a fiery old *Khân-Bahâdur*, who was a retired *rissildar* from one of our crack native cavalry regiments, had sworn with many oaths that never would he take office from, amongst others, the perjured vote of one Gunpat Lâl, pleader, who belonged to his ward, and whose evil, eloquent tongue had deliberately diddled him out of ancestral rights in a poppy-field in the Huzoor's own court. No! He had served the *Sirkar* with distinction—he had, with his own hands, nearly killed an agitator he had found in the lines—nay, more, he had absolutely sent his daughter to school to please the *sahib logue*, but *this* was too much. It had been all I could do to prevent the hot-tempered old soldier from giving up, as a signal of final rupture with the Government, the sword of honour with which he had been presented on retirement.

So, as I say, I recognised the blue paper at once as one of many voting papers which had been sent out for marking and return; for in these out-of-the-way places in those days, the secret ballot-box was not the “best blessing of the world” as it is now. And



my old friend the *hakeem* was, I know, in the *Aga-Khân's* ward.

"What have you got to do with it?" I echoed in reply to an anxious question. "Why, put a mark against the *Aga-Khân's* name and give it back whence it came."

He salaamed profoundly. "Huzoor, that was the settled determination of this slave, thus combining new duties with old, which is the philosophy of faithful life. But being called in last night to an indigestion in his house, which I combated with burnt almonds, he told me that if I so much as went near his honourable name with my stylus, I should cease to be physician-in-ordinary to his household. And, father and son, we have been physicians to the *Khân-sahibs* since our fathers followed *his* fathers from Ghazni in that capacity with the great Mahmood, on whom be peace!"

"Then mark one of the other names—which you choose—and send it in," I replied, taking no notice of the scandalous attempt at coercion on the old *Aga-Khân's* part.

A still more profound salaam was the answer. "That also would have occurred to me," came the suave old voice, "but that the *Aga-Khân* said, with oaths, that if I so much as made a chance blot on this cursed paper against any of the names thereon, I should be cast for life from his honourable company."

I felt quite nettled. Her Majesty's lieges must not be intimidated in this fashion. "Well, you must think of the person whom you consider most fitted to fulfil all the many duties which will devolve on him, and put down *his* name," I said—for in these days, when we really wished to get at the wishes of the people, we were not so strict about nominations, and proposings, and secondings, as we are now—"and I will speak again to the *Khân-Bahâdur* and see if I cannot induce him to stand." I meant to do so by threats of exposure for using force to Her Majesty's lieges.

As I rode off, my horse picking its way through the piles of melons, the bags of corn, the jars of milk, the nets of pottery, and all the *olla podrida* of trivial daily merchandise which finds pause for a few minutes about an octroi-gate at dawn-time, the patient sat up straight from his back-board and yawned, then asked for another violet drink. But the *hakeem* was absorbed in the problem of voting.

I happened that day to have business in the city in the evening also, but I entered by another gate, so that the sun was nigh

setting when, on my homeward way, I saw my old friend the *Yunâni hakeem* sitting with his pile of little medicine bottles and tiny earthenware goglets of pills and ointments beside him.

He was pounding away at something in a minute jade mortar, and looked no longer disturbed, but weary utterly.

"Have you settled that knotty point, *hakeem sahib*?" I asked.

He gave a sigh of relief, but pounded away faster than ever. "I give God thanks I have been led into the way of wisdom," he replied, "else would I be harried indeed! Never within the memory of man have so many Hindoo gentlemen of rank been sick, or have I had so many new patients as during this day. I am but now compounding the 'thirty-six-ingredient-drug' for one honourable house, and have but just finished the 'Four-great-things' for another. 'Tis anxiety about the elections, methinks, for they talk of nothing else. Hardly had your honour left this morning, than Gunpat Lâl sent to say he had a belly-ache which his idolatrous miracle-monger could not touch. I had it away in half an hour with cucumber and lemon-juice. Cold 'things to cold. And *Lalajee* full of compliments, and regrets that the *Aga-Sahib* would not be elected." A faintly worried air crept over the high old face.

"Did he ask you to give him your vote?" I inquired, with a sinking at my heart.

"Yea," replied the *Yunâni hakeem* cheerfully, "and offered me five rupees for it."

Ye gods above! How soon political corruption seizes on the innocent! I thought.

"But others have offered more," continued the old man, with a certain self-satisfaction. Then his face clouded. "Yonder pasty-faced, knock-kneed student, who calls himself 'Heddi-terlile-jackdaw'" (Editor Loyal Objector), "told me it was *his* by right, since he and *his* like were Hindustan. But I told the lad he mistook—God had ordained otherwise—for look you, Huzoor, we Mussalmans came from the north many long years before the *sahib-logue* came from the west. So I let him talk, having by God's mercy come to a decision."

"What is that, *hakeem-jee*?" I asked, curious to know what had influenced the old man.

He salaamed quite simply. "The Huzoor bade me think who could best do the work, so I decided to vote for him. He is noble, and he knows what has to be done. He

knows *santation* and *hinspukshon-conservancy*.\* Also *noo-senses* and *karl-ra-prekar-sons*,† and," he added, with the most beautiful supplementary salaam of pure flattery, "all other noble arts and philosophies."

"That is as it should be," he said simply. "The *Sirkar*, then, has not, as the people were saying, quite lost its head. The Huzoor, God willing, retains it still. But what am I to do?"

I left him looking the picture of woe,



"It hath done me much good."

It quite gave me a pang to have to tell him that this scheme of his would not work—that I was *ex officio* president of the Municipal Committee, and thus beyond the reach of voters. His face was illumined by a vast relief even amidst his perplexities.

\* Sanitation, inspection conservancy.

† Nuisances, cholera precautions.

absolutely unheeding of two patient travellers who had been awaiting my departure with that calm, stolid disregard of the passing hour which brings with it to the Western such a sense of personal grievance, whereas to the Eastern it only emphasises trust in Providence by proving the omnipotence of Fate.

Next morning, however, the whole aspect of affairs had been changed. *Hakeem-jee* was alert, spry, surrounded by quite a congregation of would-be patients, to whom he was giving out his dicta with quite a lordly air.

There was no need to ask him if he had settled his vexed question. That was apparent. I simply asked him what he had done about the paper.

"Huzoor," he said again, with that lucid candour which was so marked a feature of the man himself, "the Lord mercifully directed me. Therefore I ate it, and it hath done me much good."

"Ate it?" I echoed. "You don't mean to say——"

"Huzoor," he interrupted cheerfully, "this is how it was. After your honour left, it was the time of evening prayer. So I went, after my usual custom, to the house of God, to await the cry of the *Muazzim* and prepare myself for the presence of the Most

High by the necessary ablutions. And as I sat squatted on the edge of the Pool of Purification, my hands in the cool water, I felt as if naught could cleanse me from that accursed paper that lay folded in my breast. So I cried in my heart to the Prophet that he should show me a way, and then in one moment I saw where the error lay. I was arrogating to myself decisions that should be left to the Almighty. So I did what I do ever when life and death are at issue, when even the mighty skill of medicine has to stand on one side and do nothing.

"I took my stylus and I wrote all over that paper the attributes of the Most High—His mercy, His truth, His wisdom, His great loving-kindness. And then, Huzoor, I crushed it into the form of a bolus, I covered it with silver foil, and swallowed it as a pill.

"It hath done me much good. I am now free from anxiety. The decision of all things rests with the Most Mighty."



## SIGNS AND TOKENS.

MEJNUN, THE TOUAREG, EXPLAINS WHY THE WOMEN  
OF HIS TRIBE ARE TATTOOED.

**T**HESE signs on ankle, arm, and brow  
Were those whereby they knew our dead.  
Only our women use them now,  
But anciently my grandsire said—

"If in the wilderness I die,  
Or from the millet-field am ta'en  
To Allah's bosom, then shall I  
Leave my worn body on the plain.

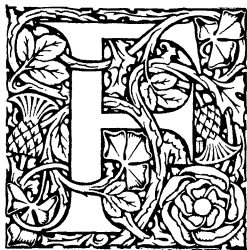
"Ankle and arm are marked with blue  
Flowers in design, and thus are shown  
My tribe and house, whereby to you,  
O Fransawi, I am made known.

"And, at this naming, you shall find  
Allah's great 'Aleph' scrolled apart  
Upon my forehead, yet be blind  
To 'Leila' written in my heart!"

VICTOR PLARR.

# THE JOLLY SMUGGLERS.

By HALLIWELL SUTCLIFFE.



FROM Beachy Head the cliffs sloped east to what was, in those days, a lonely coast—a flat coast, guarded by unstable pebble-ridges and the more solid towers built when Bonaparte was a bogey to

scare children with o' nights. Landward, the bay of Pevensey, then, as now, was girdled by marshlands, crossed and recrossed by intricate and sleepy waters, narrow to the eye, but too wide for a man to cross unless he had a pole or bridge to help him.

Waterloo was history by this time, and the Sussex folk were compelled to turn their high, sea-bred spirits into a quieter channel than that of open war. It was said that, from fisherman to squire, from parson to small farmer, the coastmen were smugglers all, except the Preventive men, and even they were said "to do a little business privately."

The traffic had grown to the dignity of a feud by now. It was no longer merely the running of a profitable cargo, or the frustration of it, that kept the heart alive in smuggler and Preventive; it was the love of outwitting each other, and so repaying earlier defeats. And the sea beat on the pebble-ridges, and the stones rattled up in fury, retired in sighing, long appeal, and the seaward men, fishers and squires and parsons, were wild and tender as the stormy coast itself.

At six of the evening Jack Hunter was busying himself with a fishing-coble that lay on the topmost pebble-ridge. His face was placid—almost sleepy, one might have said—as he lit his pipe and put his nets aboard.

He heard a step on the shingle, glanced up lazily, and saw Jonathan Wright, the keenest Preventive on the Sussex coast.

"Evening, Jack!" said Wright suavely. "Going fishing, I see."

"Aye. Just getting things ship-shape till my mates come down. They're late, I reckon," he added, with a glance at the sun, which served him as a timepiece.

Wright shifted his quid of tobacco from the left cheek to the right. "You'll be going far out?" he asked. "There's a big shoal o' mackerel, so they say, out Deadman's Reef way."

"Aye," answered the other, with a sleepy, upward glance. "It will be hard rowing, Jonathan—the sea's a bit choppy—but poor men must find their living where they can."

"Well, good e'en, Jack. Let's hope you'll land your cargo safely."

Each was aware how much the other knew, but it was good breeding on the coast to affect this pleasant air of innocence and good-fellowship, until the cargo was being beached, and then there was another code of manners.

Jack Hunter let him go twenty yards or so across the pebbles. Then he hailed him. "I've better reason than you for wanting to beach this lot o' mackerel," he said. "The miller's lass is a better fish than ever came out o' the sea, and she's promised something—if I land this haul."

The Preventive turned sharp on his heel and returned on his paces, and stood glowering at the fisherman. This was a plain challenge, for there was not a man along the Pevensey shore who did not know that Lucy o' Mill, as they named her, was to be wife to one of these two. Each had courted her with clumsy openness, and to each she had shown the discretion, tempered by sudden gusts of warmth, which is usual with maids when life's at spring and all the world before them.

"Mackerel's a ticklish cargo, like women," he said.

"Aye, but a brave heart and a clear head—specially a clear head, Jonathan—they win good fish fro' the sea."

"Here's your mates coming," said the Preventive, glancing over the marshes in search of inspiration, and seeing the rest of the crew, two miles away, swinging through the green marshland. "Row out to Boulogne and back, and see what's waiting for ye at your home-coming."

"Boulogne and back?" said Hunter softly. "There's a nearer shoal of mackerel than that."

"Just so; but I never yet saw mackerel

that lay in a boat's bottom and looked like kegs o' brandy."

"Dear alive!" murmured the other, with the same exasperating calm. "You'd have to tap a keg o' brandy, Jonathan, before you saw the bottom of a boat look just like that. Best keep wide o' strong liquors, Jonathan, in future."

"Aye, till you're back from Boulogne, my lad," snapped the Preventive. "Then I'll sample a keg or two, and show 'em to head-quarters."

Jack Hunter watched him go twenty paces, then hailed him lazily.

"Well?" growled the Preventive.

"Oh, just naught at all. It seems a lot o' fuss to make about a catch o' mackerel. Good night, Jonathan."

Jonathan Wright went on without reply and turned inland, and presently was hidden by the stiff, thick-growing gorse. After all, he told himself, the last laugh would not be Jack Hunter's, but his, and he could afford to wait. He knew that the nets lying in the bottom of Hunter's boat would not be cast; he knew that each of the four men he had seen crossing Pevensy marsh was pledged to row over to Boulogne with Jack; he knew, almost to an hour, the time of their return, unless foul weather blew up against the tranquil sea and sky; and his preparation was made.

Jack Hunter was whistling softly, after glancing up and seeing his four comrades no more than a mile and a half across the marshes. And, as he whistled, a light step sounded on the shingle, and Lucy o' Mill stood there, not knowing—so the colour in her face said, and her eager voice, and the laugh that broke halfway—whether she were glad or ashamed of the errand that had brought her here.

"Now, here's a lucky start for the fishing," said Jack, with boisterous good humour.

"There'd have been no lucky ending, though, if the Preventive had taken a fancy to stay by till you were launched." The girl's tone was crisp and business-like. Her shame was forgotten in the need to tell all she knew and tell it quickly. "Listen, Jack! I met Jonathan Wright yestreen—'twas on the Pevensy road, as I was hurrying home for fear the dark would overtake me—and he would stop and talk with me, though I tried to pass by."

Jack Hunter flushed. "I wish I'd cracked his skull just now!" he said, forgetting his lazy drawl.

"Oh, there was no need!" Lucy was

laughing softly. "I don't know if he'd paid duty on the cargo, Jack, but he was carrying a full one home. And, duty paid or no duty, it seems to have the same queer way with a man. He was in his boastful mood, and would tell me all his tales of beach-running. Then he asked if I'd marry him, and, because I laughed in his face, he grew angry."

Jack Hunter ceased to clench his fists. "You laughed in his face?" he asked, with stolid gravity. "Well, then, you can go on with your tale."

"He said you were crossing to Boulogne to-night, and that he was going to catch you in a trap this time. So then I dared him to do it—twitted him with all the times you'd fooled him—and he blurted out his plans like a baby."

She glanced at him with a return of the shy, half-laughing glance that had puzzled him at first.

"His plans!" chuckled Jack. "I know 'em as I know every dyke of Pevensy marshes."

"Aye, but not this one." She laid a quick hand on his arm. "He's been clever this time, Jack. There's not a cove between Hastings and Beachy Head that will not be watched against your coming. They're keen to get you, and the whole coastguard will be watching."

"So!" murmured Jack. "Then we'll just beach anywhere, and chance it, Lucy."

"And be caught." She glanced at the marshes, saw Jack's four shipmates scarce half a mile away now. "Trust me this once, Jack."

"I'd trust you anywhere. That's why I ask you once a week—twice when times are slack—to marry me, and have done with it."

"But why should I?" She stood a little away from him, arms akimbo. There was something dainty and trim about her that reminded Jack of a sailing-boat curtsying to the wind. "There's father needing me at the mill. I am all he has, you see, and it would never do to leave him."

"Well, as for that, there's a widow setting her cap at the miller, and they do say your father has been talking a deal lately of second marriages."

"Oh, Jack, for shame! Besides, it would make no difference. I—I've no wish to leave home; or, if I did, I—I should want to choose my man."

"That's just what I'm asking you to do."

"Ah, but there's so little choice here, if you come to think of it."

Jack Hunter's face darkened. She was such a slip of a lass to have this power over him, and her moods "shifted from west to east like a teasy wind, till a man didn't know which way to trim his sails." Then he laughed. He was slow to see new points of view, but quick enough when he was moved at last.

"There was some sort of a bargain between us, Lucy," he said, with the old, good-humoured laziness. "If I beach this cargo safe, you're to marry me."

"Oh, there was some jest of the sort."

"It was no jest. It was a promise, and I'll hold you to it."

For some reason, Lucy o' Mill could not meet his glance. Her conscience was troubled, or a fresh whim had taken her—Lucy herself was little wiser than the man who watched her.

"And what I want to know is just this," went on the sailor doggedly. "You know the bargain. You chanced on the Preventive when he was in the humour to let things out, and you're here to warn me. Two and two make four, my lass, and that's as plain as knotting a rope."

Lucy glanced over Pevensey marsh. "Your mates are coming through the gorse," she said. "Good-bye, Jack! I may be fooling you"—again the wayward glance that might be due to conscience or a passing whim—"or I may want you to come safely home. I scarcely know myself where the wind is. Only, when you beach your cargo, *keep wide of Glyne Gap*. Good-bye, Jack!"

Before he could check her for a last word, or ask her meaning, she was stepping over the pebble-ridge, and she did not turn, as Jack hoped she would, for a farewell wave of the hand.

"The boat's ready," said one of the four men who came scrunching over the pebbles. "I didn't hope as much, Jack, not when I saw Lucy o' Mill playing her cantrips with you."

Jack's look was ugly. "I'll ask you to keep Lucy's name off your tongue," he growled, "or there'll be a choppy sea 'twixt this and Boulogne."

"There was no offence, mate. How tetchy these young 'uns are, to be sure, when they happen to love a maid! I'm old and grizzled, Jack, and I tell you there's naught like a boat—a saucy boat on a saucy sea—and us rowing all the while from shoreward women. Bless me, I'd rather any day be pulling an oar on the open sea than sitting at home with a wife!"

"Tastes differ," said Jack, still with a touch of soreness in his voice.

"Aye, but we've to cross to France, my lad, and wives and such-like must wait a while."

They got their boat down to the sea and rowed her out. And presently they hoisted sail, because a puff of the light wind served them; and so, between sailing and hard pulling at the oars, they reached Boulogne. The landward men, who thought themselves hard-worked at the plough, would have been aghast to know how these five sailors had conquered weariness during the forty miles that stretched between Pevensey Bay and the French coast.

They went ashore for a spell, after beaching their cockle-shell of a boat, and his comrades twitted Jack with his conspicuous lack of gallantry toward the lasses of Boulogne, who were good to look at and who eyed him with laughing favour.

"You're love-sick! Not a doubt of it," said the greybeard of the crew, as he slapped Jack on the shoulder. "You'll not drink like a man, you'll not look at a pretty face. Eh, well, we shall have you married by and by, and after that——"

Again Jack Hunter carried his fighting look, and the other slipped away with a dry chuckle. "It's a sort o' sickness," he muttered sagely, "like hay fever, or the rickets, or such-like ailments. Goodness knows, I never had it myself, so it's not for me to judge what the blamed thing feels like."

In shore from Pevensey Bay, on the evening of that day, Lucy o' Mill was standing at the Preventive's gate, and Jonathan Wright was basking under her smiles as only fat, vainglorious men can bask.

She had listened to his tales of imaginary prowess—of cargoes beached and seized, after desperate conflict on the shore, of sleuth-like diligence on his part in tracking smugglers—until she was divided between the wish for sleep and the impulse to laugh outright. Then, deftly enough, she approached the real meaning of her errand.

"You'll remember, Mr. Wright, how I warned you of this last trip to Boulogne and back?"

"Aye, it was kind o' you." The man's bigness and self-complacency were offensive. He was so sure of himself, of the reason for Lucy's kindness.

"And I told you—oh, I should have been shamed to speak of it!—I told you why I wanted Jack Hunter to be caught this time.



Well, he'll be home to-morrow night, and there's no need to spread your men from Beachy Head to Hastings. Gather them all in the one place—Jack's crew are tough when it comes to open fight—and make sure of them this time."

The Preventive man, complacent as he was, began to wonder why Lucy, bred of smuggling folk and reared to the tradition, should be so eager for this betrayal. She reminded him, with a sudden upward glance, of the reason she had given three days ago, and the man's foolishness grew big and bigger, and plumed itself like a peacock's tail.

"Where is the landing-place?" he asked.

"Glyne Gap, just this side of Hastings. Draw in your men before to-morrow night, and watch there, and I'll promise you——"

"Just to marry me, I take it," broke in the Preventive, with easy self-assurance.

"Yes," said Lucy o' Mill gravely, "if only you'll spoil Jack Hunter's landing. I told you what the bargain was."

"Well, we've as good as got him, so I'll take a kiss in advance, I reckon."

The girl flushed. With a sudden understanding she knew what her feeling was for Jack. And she had played with him—played, too, with this leering Preventive man, who was moving heavily toward her. She turned and ran across the marshes, and did not halt till she was in the Pevensey road; and then, with one of her random changes, she laughed. These men were so simple, after all, and women could arrange, it seemed, even the details of a smuggling venture.

On the next night, as dusk crept over the sea, there was an unwonted stir along the coast. From Pevensey Bay, from the flats that lay under old Bexhill, little companies of men began to move like shadows, and all were walking east. Glyne Gap—a lonely spot enough, wide of the gallant little port of Hastings—was the centre of some big enterprise to-night.

Jonathan Wright, full of importance, was welcoming the men as they arrived, singly or in companies of two or three, and a good deal of laughter was abroad.

"Jack Hunter's had a long rope," said one, "but I reckon he's come to the end of it."

"Simple as living a swarm o' bees," answered Jonathan. "Glyne Gap is not just so lonely as he thinks."

Far out at sea a boat was making for the Sussex coast. The wind had failed her, and Jack Hunter and his mates were tugging at

the oars, with little breath for speech. Then a quick breeze got up—a landward one—and they hoisted sail again and shipped their oars.

"I've a fancy for landing at Glyne Gap to-night," said one of the crew. "We're a bit weary, lads, and wanting our beds. It's all so much work added to run up against Preventive men and crack a crown or two. Glyne Gap is safe enough; they'll look for us nearer Pevensey."

"No," said Jack Hunter sharply, "we'll put in anywhere but there."

His mates glanced at one another. Jack had been "queer in the head" throughout this venture. He had shown an odd caution, a dread of capture, unlike his usual rollicking contempt of the Preventives. He had fought shy of gaiety, moreover, on the French shore, and his tongue had been sharp when his old mates bantered him. And now he was falling foul of Glyne Gap, as quiet and peaceable a landing-place as any on the coast.

"You're very sure o' yourself, Jack Hunter," growled one of the crew. "Why shouldn't we put in at Glyne Gap?"

"Because they'll never look for us to land at Pevensey Bay. *Land near home, where they least expect you!* Haven't you learned as much as that o' smuggler's craft?"

They were unconvinced, and he cast about for other logic.

"I've had warning, if you want to know," he growled. "They're waiting for us at Glyne Gap."

Still their sailor's superstition troubled them. For some reason or another, Jack Hunter was "not wise" to-night, and by instinct they distrusted him.

"From a woman?" asked one.

"Well, yes"—Jack's mouth was hard and set—"it was from a woman."

"A spy o' Jonathan Wright's, then. They say he's a devil wi' the women, for all his foolishness. He set her on to fool you, Jack."

For a moment Jack wavered in his faith. Lucy o' Mill had pledged herself to marry him if this cargo were safely beached. He had been harassed by the thought of losing her ever since Boulogne, and now all was to be wasted, so it seemed.

Jack's spirits were at ebb-tide. He was tired and full of thirst and hunger. What if these seagoing mates of his were right when they said no woman could be trusted? Then he thought of Lucy o' Mill, as she had stood beside him on the shore—limber and

good to look at, and eager for his safety. He would not doubt her.

"Well, I for one won't land at Glyne Gap to-night," he said.

"You'll have to, lad, if we've to make you."

He saw that their temper was growing brittle, and with quick inspiration he appealed to that superstition which was as deep-rooted as their love of smuggling and the sea.

"Then, if you must have it, lads, I'll tell you my reason. I was feared you'd laugh at me, or I'd have told you at the first. I dreamed last night—sure as my name's Jack Hunter, I did—that I was standing just where Glyne Gap runs down to the shore. And I heard the sea *calling*—same as it does when our women are waiting for the fishers to come home—same as it does when our women fall to crying, my lads—"

"Oh, durn your dreams!" growled the oldest of the crew.

"We're not to be scared by



"'Top o' the night to you, Jonathan!' he called merrily. 'Have you been trying to catch mackerel, or what?'"



nightmares, Jack, 'specially as you seem to have been in a waking sort o' nightmare ever since we sailed on this unchancy trip."

Yet no more was said of Glyne Gap, and somehow it was Jack who chose the landing-place, with only a muttered protest now and then that had no heart behind it. The wind still served them, and Jack, as he watched

the shore-line creep through the half-light, was content that, in sober fact, he had dreamed of Glyne Gap last night, and of the sea calling to the women that it had claimed their men.

They put in near the last of the Martello Towers on the Cooden side of the bay, and beached their cargo. All was desolate and still, save for the lapping of the sea on the shifting pebble-ridge. Then Jack Hunter, without a word said, sped across the marshes, while the four others guarded the kegs, the bundles of tobacco, that made blurred splashes on the grey line of the beach. And by and by Jack returned, sitting on a farm-cart, with the farmer himself rubbing sleepy eyes as he let the old mare pick her well-remembered way to the beach.

When all was done, and the cart rumbling inland with its load, Jack Hunter laughed—for the first time since Boulogne.

"Good night, mates," he said. "I've other work to do before dawn."

"He's got the wind in his cap, has Jack," muttered one of the crew, as he watched the spare, strong figure out of sight.

Jack came to the miller's house. The sails of the mill reached up, black and still, into a sky of milky grey. There was a candle burning at the little window over the porch, as he had hoped there would be, and he gave the call of a sea-bird roused from sleep.

"The cargo's beached, Lucy," he said, soon as a head appeared at the upper window. "I thought you'd like to know."

He heard a sound of muffled laughter from overhead, and answered it with a loudness that threatened to wake the miller from his sleep. One had gone through the hardship of the long journey from Boulogne; the other had waited for his news—a harder task. The relief to both was quick and eager.

Jack heard something drop at his feet, and stooped and picked it up. "A key, Lucy? What's the use o' that?" he asked bluntly.

"It unlocks the stable-door, Jack. Saddle father's pony, and ride to Glyné Gap, and bring me your tale to-morrow of what you see there."

"But, Lucy, you'll steal down for the length of a kiss?"

"Yes, to-morrow, Jack."

She held the casement in her hand, and half closed it. Her face, in the soft candle-light, was near to a man's dream of what women should be.

"Aye, but the bargain?" he blurted out.

The window was opened a little wider. "What bargain, Jack?"

"If I ran this cargo safely."

"Oh, to be sure! I had forgotten. Ride to Glyné Gap and find your answer."

The window was closed with a snap. For five minutes Jack waited in hope of a reprieve. Then he saw her, shadowy against the blind, and the candle's light went out.

"They're just like the sea, these women," he grumbled, "teasy and soft, but they draw a man, somehow."

He waited a moment longer, then crossed to the stable. It was not the first time he had borrowed a neighbour's horse without leave asked, and he knew the way of it.

The miller turned in a heavy sleep, fancying he heard the sound of hoofs, but Jack was already riding helter-skelter for Glyné Gap, sitting his nag as seamen do—not much to look at, but getting home for

all that. He did not know what to expect there, but Lucy had bidden him go, and he must humour her. The moon got up as he reached Glyné Gap, and he checked his pony suddenly on seeing the knot of men on the beach below him. They were looking glumly out to sea, and Jonathan Wright was using his choicest oaths.

"We might as well get home to our beds," he said at last. "There's no chance o' their landing now the moon's up. Durn me if Jack Hunter and his lot haven't done us again! Eh, what's that?" He broke off, looking sharply up the Gap.

Jack, up above, had grasped the meaning of it all, and he sat there in his saddle, holding his sides for laughter. This was Lucy's answer to him, and she had bidden him land anywhere save at Glyné Gap, because she had tricked the whole Preventive service along the bay into the belief that a cargo was to be landed there. And this was proof, after all, that she had wished him to succeed, and to claim his bargain—and women were queer cattle.

"Top o' the night to you, Jonathan!" he called merrily. "Have you been trying to catch mackerel, or what?"

"That's as may be," growled the other, with a show of dignity. "We're on Government service, and smuggling folk had best be asking no questions."

"Well, I've been over to Boulogne and back, for my part. Oh, don't go scenting contraband, Jonathan. I'm to be married soon, you see, and Lucy o' Mill had a fancy for a special sort of wedding-ring—a sort you can only buy in Boulogne."

"You're a black rascal, Jack Hunter!" stammered the Preventive.

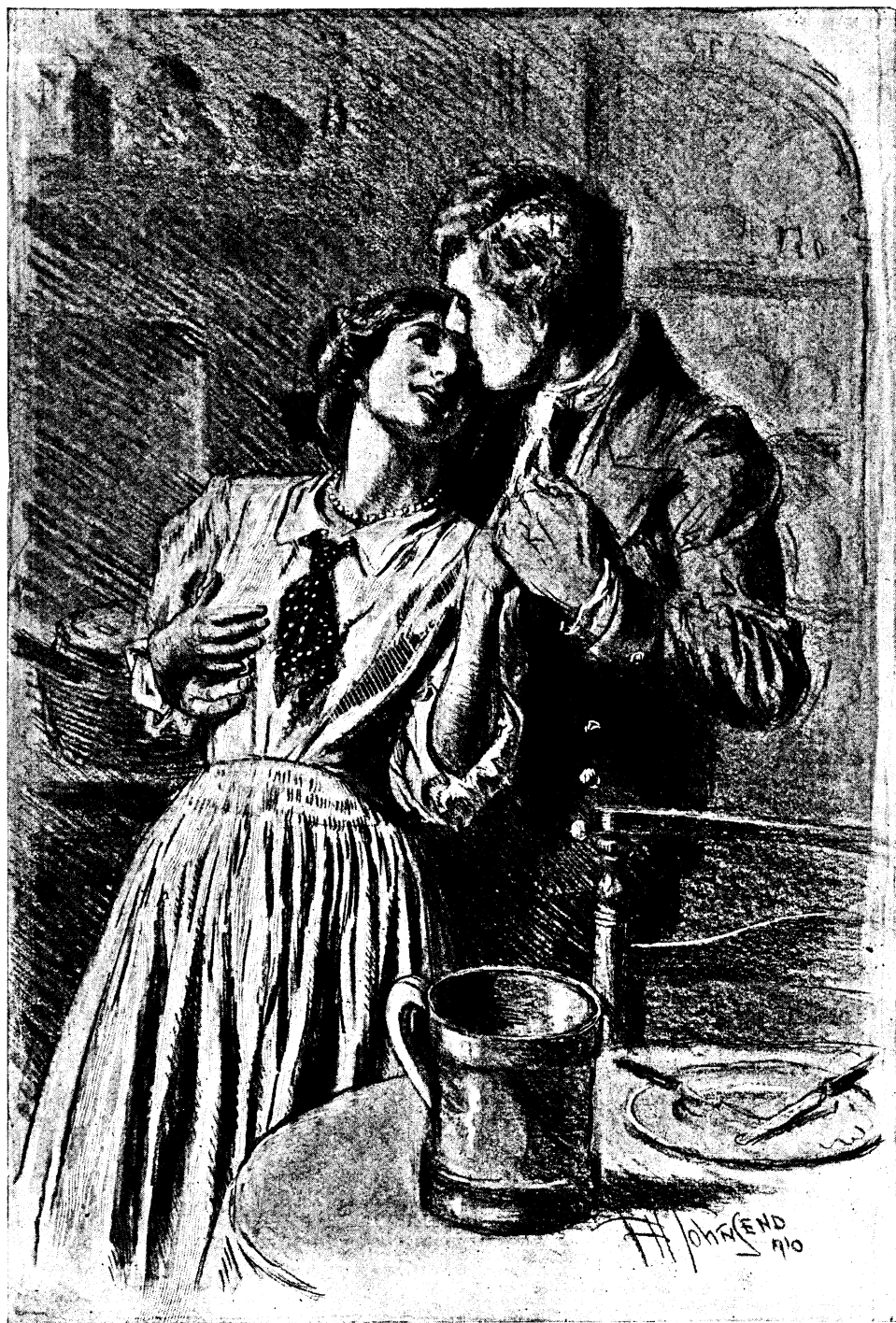
"Maybe—aye, maybe. Perhaps she chose me for that reason. Well, good night, all. I've borrowed a pony, and must get him back in stable before his owner wakes."

At seven of the next morning, Jack sauntered over to the mill, and found the miller himself crossing the strip of garden.

"You're an early bird, Jack—early for you, that is. What's your errand?"

"Oh, there's a keg of brandy waiting for you *in a place we know of*. I thought you'd like to know."

"Come, now, that's neighbourly—down-right neighbourly, I call it. I've to start with a cartload of flour, as it happens, and yon keg will sit snug among the sacks when I drive back. Step forrard, Jack, and see if Lucy has a bit o' breakfast for you. I must be jogging, for I'm late a'ready."



“Let's say to-morrow fortnight.”

Lucy was ill at ease and shy. She busied herself with the breakfast things, and darted from one topic to another with bewildering speed; but he was in no mood to be played with.

"I went to Glyne Gap," he said. "Fat Jonathan was there, and all the king's officers from here to Beachy Head, and they looked as glum as sea-crows on a rock."

"Oh, did they, Jack? Here's your rasher ready for you, and an egg that Biddy, the white hen, laid. Biddy's the best layer I have——"

"We're not talking of poultry," put in Jack, with an air of decision and mastery that was new to Lucy o' Mill. "I've been wondering a deal since last night. Stands to sense you wouldn't have warned me about Glyne Gap if you hadn't wanted to marry me. Then why, all these months, did you let fat Jonathan——"

"Won't you see, Jack? I—I played with you both because—because I didn't want to marry either. It was so easy to keep you both at loggerheads, while I looked on."

"Well, women beat me, and always did. Men are like a bit of rough cliff—you know 'em, weather-marks and scars and all, and they stand firm as they were made—but women—bless me, they're like the sea, that doesn't know its mind from one minute to the next!"

"That's true. Women are like that."

He glanced up, aware of a break in her voice, and he saw that she was crying. So he fidgeted up and down, in a man's way, and wished he was back again on the open sea, tugging contraband safely home to port. Then he put an arm about her and lifted her face to his.

"What's the use o' crying?" he asked bluntly. "There's salt water enough in the sea already, goodness knows."

"There's no use. That's why women cry, Jack. There's so much to be done in a day that, in between whiles, 'tis a big comfort just to cry for nothing."

"I'm a plain seafaring man, Lucy. Either you wanted to marry me, or you didn't. I was waiting for you, and you knew it. You'd the chance o' saying 'Yes' every week or so——"

"That was it, Jack," she broke in, with a quiet laugh. "You blew too steady—and perhaps you'd better have taken a whip to me, or played with another lass—just anything to wear me down."

"I was never good at moonshine. Yes, it's a good rasher, and the egg boiled to a turn, Lucy—but I've been wondering, as I told you. You've taken such a senseless lot o' trouble about catching a fish that was in your net to start with. First of all, you say you'll come to the parson with me if I land a cargo; then you go and tell Jonathan Wright that I mean to put a boat in, just to lead him a wild-geese chase to Glyne——"

Lucy o' Mill grew still more restless. Then she faced him. "Jack—I *must* be honest with you, though I don't want to be. I—I warned him first because—oh, I wanted him to catch you!"

He got up and gripped her by the arms, and his voice was so grave that again she had an odd desire to laugh. "Speak out, Lucy! I'd rather face it, if there's aught to tell, and wring his neck a bit later in the day."

"It was this way, Jack. You'll be sure to understand. When I'd promised to marry you, if you brought the cargo home, I—I grew frightened. You'd be sure to land it—you always have the luck, they say—and I couldn't break my promise then—and I—I was frightened, somehow. I didn't want to marry anyone, Jack—not then. So I told the Preventive you were coming from Boulogne, and—then I was sorry—and I made them all go to Glyne Gap. You see how it was, Jack, don't you? It was because I—because I loved you, Jack, and didn't know it."

Jack Hunter stood a while in sheer perplexity. Then he looked into the clear, truthful eyes that had always a glint of the sea in them, and suddenly he laughed.

"It must feel queer to be a woman," he said.

"It does. We want—oh, I think we're tired of the sea, and want to be safe in harbour."

"Say to-morrow week?"

"You were always so light and hasty, Jack. It will take a month to persuade father—though he did tell me last night he meant to marry again—and two months more to get my clothes ready, and by that time winter will be on us. It's foolish to go marrying in winter, when there's all the spring to come."

Jack Hunter kissed her frankly before she guessed his purpose.

"Best get into harbour, little sea-boat; I'm needing you," he said. "Let's say to-morrow fortnight."

# AT CALL OF DAWN.

By AUSTIN HARRISON.



HE morning sun of Africa beat down in torrid haze upon Casablanca, the white city. Splashed against the arid, gold-brown upland and the immensity of the fierce blue arc above, it glinted dazzling

white, cool and peaceful there in the shimmer of the morning fire. Not a ripple stirred the waters lapping, in white fringe of foam, the low, sand-dune shores. At anchor in the roadstead massive warships rode—black, sinister, still, yet cool and peaceful too under their white umbrella awnings—while small sharks played curiously around them. A heavy silence brooded in the quivering air. Only the tall beauty of a solitary date-palm, silhouetted upon the arid hillock, seemed real and living in all that ardent desolation. Casablanca, nestling in a creek of the long arm of North-Western Africa extending into the Atlantic, was a dead city—an evil-smelling, fly-plagued, shattered, and deserted Moorish ruin, as the result of the recent French bombardment.

A French shell had blasted an enormous rent through the wall of the mosque, which stood with gaping front, roofless and ridiculous, amid the battered palm-grove and white gravestones of the little cemetery, for all ships that passed that way, and all Islam, to marvel at. All the illusion—the inviolate mystery—of that Moorish sanctity yawned open to the heavens; what Arab saw it covered up his face in awe and misery. There had been bloody, devastating work. Whole streets, whole quarters of the town, lay in ruin upon the ground. The fire of pillage, of war, had passed over the city, wanton, cruel, annihilating. A rubbled litter, Casablanca lay literally upon itself. First the marauding hill tribesmen had descended upon it, for all the world like clouds, with their grey barbs and white flowing cloaks, burning, pillaging and slaying what Jews, Moors, or “infidels” they encountered; the rest had been destroyed by the French guns.

The captain of the gunboat *Phénomène*

spat thoughtfully over the side. He was a prim, dapper little man, but it was not usual for him to be up on deck at six in the morning, and when he spat, the men knew that something had gone amiss.

“*Bigre!*” he muttered to himself, and resumed his paces along the deck. Then his glance fell upon the black figure of the Moor lashed head and foot to the mast.

The little Frenchman glanced curiously at the man as he strode reflectively up and down, blew his nose authoritatively, and spat again.

“Rum thing, how that black imp stares!” he muttered. He leant against the gunwale and stared too.

In effect the Moor looked more like an effigy than a human being, he stood so still and erect and rigid, so fixed and intense was his gaze. His white teeth gleamed horribly against the black face, and the white of his eyes, strangely large and lustrous, shone, as if in ecstasy, across the waters towards the shattered city, grotesque, as all ruins, even in its pathos. Not a muscle in the man’s face moved. The arms were bound behind his back. A thick cord clamped the black feet to the mast. His head, tightly secured and held upright by a strap fastened round his neck, looked curiously black and cruel, with the red line of an open wound streaking the clean-shaven crown, while hanging out of his mouth, like a sick animal’s, the red tongue protruded listlessly.

A sailor was washing down the deck, and the water trickled and bubbled over the black feet of the Moor, who, however, continued staring fixedly into space, the big eyes glaring in hideous calm and concentration.

“A thousand devils!” said the captain. “He’s saying his prayers, I suppose,” and he rolled a cigarette.

The Moor was to be shot at half-past six that morning; but the men were quite correct in their reflections when they saw the captain spit, for he was very much perplexed and annoyed.

It was rather an unusual case. Quarter was neither sought nor given in Morocco, and the very last thing the French wished to encumber themselves with was the problem of prisoners. Fanatical Islam had no use for mercy, nor had Christianity any mercy for



Islam. But, unfortunately, young Pichat, the lieutenant in charge of the marines he had landed during the bloody days at Casablanca, had a perfect mania for ethnic photography. Wherever he went, the fellow brought back types, photographed and drew them, and even tried to tame them, and he had done it again at Casablanca.

The Moor was a magnificent specimen, the captain admitted—tall, angular, and muscular, with limbs as sleek and flexible as a panther's and a ferocity of the purest savagery. He had massacred like a fiend in the town, and Pichat, when he came upon him, ought to have given him his proper quittance. Instead of which he had merely knocked him down, tied and covered him up, and when the fighting was over, had actually carried the man on his back down to the boats and brought him, stripped and insensible, on board the ship.

The captain was extremely fond of young Pichat, who was a fine sailor and sang the best comic song in the whole Mediterranean station, so, being reluctant to insist upon the right thing being done, he had discreetly decided not to know anything about it. Unfortunately, the Moor had not been equally discreet.

For on the morrow, when the Moor had come to, and young Pichat was enthusiastically measuring his forehead and taking photographs, the man had suddenly run amok, flown at one of the sailors with a long Moorish dagger, and the poor chap was thrown into the sea that evening. It was true that Pichat had again knocked the Moor insensible, but it was a case of murder—murder by a prisoner of war, who was technically not a prisoner at all—and there was no option. The affair had to be reported, and so, as the result of a drumhead court-martial which lasted seven minutes, it had been decided to shoot the Moor on the following morning when the flag was hoisted aloft.

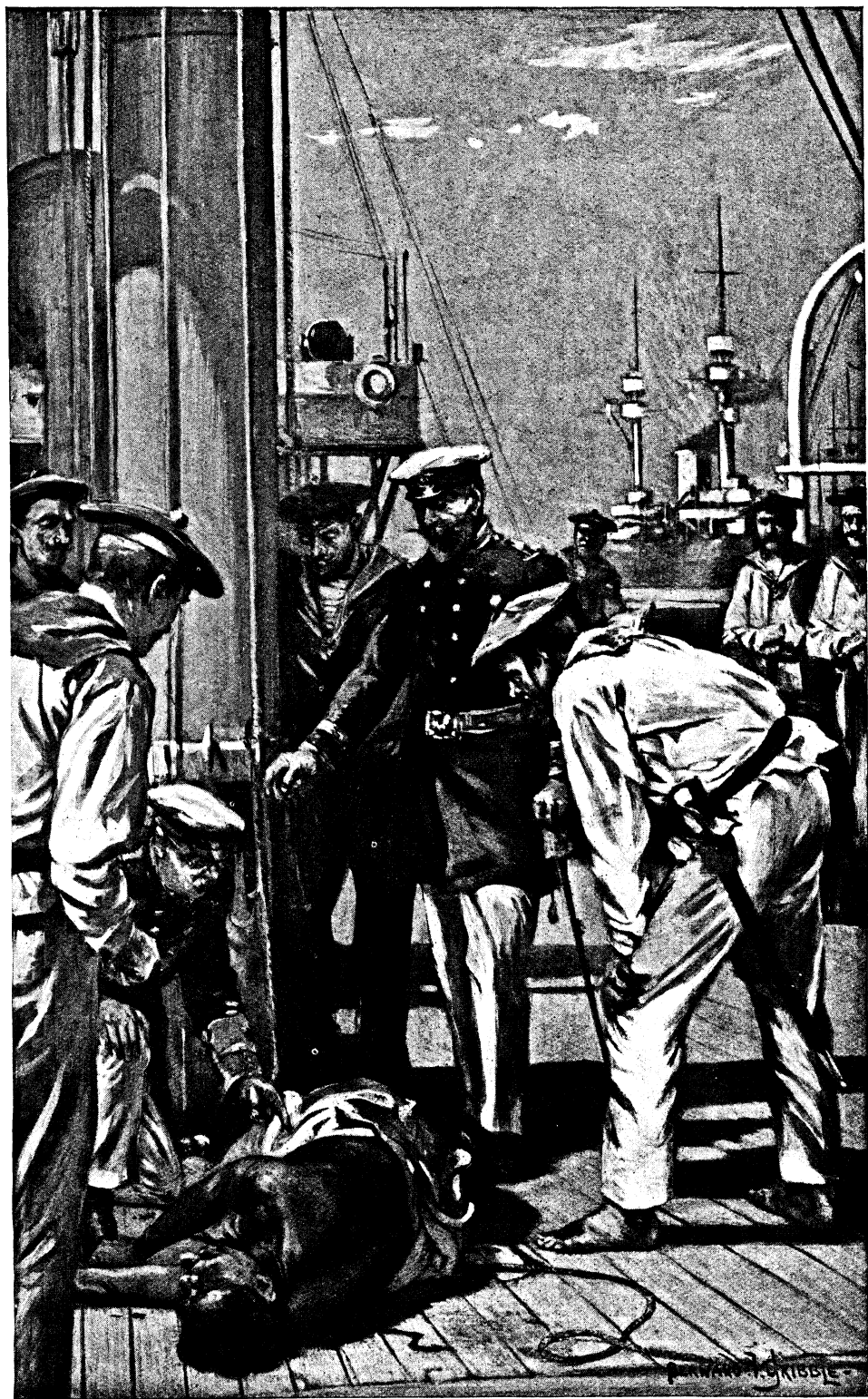
That was how the Moor came to spend the night lashed to the mast of the gunboat *Phénomène*, and that was why the captain had risen so early and spat that morning twice into the sea.

As he smoked his cigarette, the captain could not refrain from admiring the fellow. There was something singularly impressive about the magnificent calm and *bravura* of the man, lashed like a mad dog to the mast. He knew overnight he was to be shot—so much Pichat, who spoke a little Arabic, had been instructed to convey to him—yet there was no sign of weakness, fear, or vacillation.

The captain had seen many a man die nobly, with only the fear of God upon him, but the calm of this savage—a reptile, no doubt, whom civilisation had every right to destroy—had a touch of the sublime which interested and moved him, in spite of his long experience in colonial stations, and the fact that he had enjoyed the first fresh egg that he had eaten for three weeks with his coffee that morning. Would he have stood so straight and defiant, with eyes so bright and insolent, on the eve of death? The whole business was an infernal nuisance. He would have to send in a report, reprimand Pichat, and he had lost one of his best men. Then there was the martial circumstance of a firing-party—an affair he always disliked—and a totally superfluous pomp and disciplinary array which always upset the men, involving a ceremony which in the case was ridiculous, and a little speech which he disliked intensely.

He paced mechanically up and down, hugging a telescope under his arm, and every time he turned and threw a glance at the Moor, his astonishment and admiration increased. He made up his mind to have the potter over as soon as possible, with due ceremony, of course, but with lightning despatch, at the call of the trumpet tattoo. Then he would go below and write his sister Jeanne a letter, telling her all about it. As he came to this decision, the boatswain whistle piped up the ship. The captain looked searchingly at the Moor, but the black face never stirred; the eyes shone, gazing outward in mesmeric gleam. Only the loose white cloak seemed to shudder in the air upon the bare ebony chest; he was like a figure cast in bronze.

But the men were evidently ready for the little episode. Almost before the shrill rattle of the whistle had ceased, they came tumbling up the ladders, some of them fastening up their straps and buttons, the twelve marines who composed the firing-party first, filing sleepily and indifferently on deck, the others on duty following them, giving hasty corrective touches to their uniforms, like women arranging their hair. The firing-party lined up on the lower deck at the stern, six on either side, facing one another, and leant carelessly upon their rifles. Up popped the first mate from below, looking very spruce and business-like in his spotless white ducks, and immediately marched up the file of marines, fidgeting now with a button, now with a strap, and nodded to the little ship's band of trumpeters and to the two fat boys with drums to take up their



“‘One of the strangest things I’ve ever seen.’”

posts at the stern near the bare pole which pointed into the quivering blue at the poop.

A rail had been taken off there, and a small plank projected over the stern, butting out to sea.

Amidships a peeping cluster of heads took up advantageous positions. The cook seated himself comfortably astride the four-inch gun, with a long French roll and a piece of cheese in his hand, and proceeded solemnly with his breakfast, and behind him two stokers stood and crossed their arms upon their naked chests, and just in front of them, somewhat to the side, so as not to obscure their view, the ship's boy made a favourable stand with two turned-up buckets.

"Attention!" bawled out the first mate suddenly, and the muskets rattled upon the deck.

The captain pulled out his watch and noted that it was just on half-past six.

"All ready?" he sang out.

"All ready, sir!" sang back the mate.

Then temptation grew too strong for him, and the captain strode near to the Moor.

The black face gleamed immovable, the eyes shone, stark and glazed and horrible, stricken with a strange calm.

"*Tonnere de Dieu!*" said the captain, "the man's gone mad!"

When he was quite close, he looked at the Moor curiously. There was something indescribably strange about the cynical stillness of the man, gazing, as if hypnotised, across the blue sea. The red tongue hung out, stiff and motionless; the upper lip was twisted and screwed back, revealing the white glinting teeth, still and terrible with the snarl and grimace of a wild beast; and above, the big eyes, white and bulging, shone with an unearthly lustre.

The captain took a couple of steps nearer. On the man's black neck the veins stood out in great knotted ropes. Round the gaping wound on his shaved head clots of congealed blood glistened in the burning sun. A thin line of red ran down across the forehead and the tip of the nose, and had made a little pool of blood upon the white flowing garment about his body, and stained the deck around his feet. The Moor seemed not to see him. He was so still, he appeared not even to breathe.

The captain eyed him for a moment wonderingly, then he moved round straight in the way of the man's eyes. He looked—looked closer, advancing up to the shining, grinning countenance, and touched lightly the man's skin.

"Odd," he muttered; "it's warm enough. Perhaps that's the sun."

Then he looked right into the Moor's eyes and blew upon them. The eyelids never quivered. He blew again hard, as hard as he could, but the white, staring eyes only seemed to mock him, ghastly, glazed, and defiant.

He stepped back.

"Here, one of you, come here!" he called out.

"Unloose him," he said sharply to the sailor who ran up, and the man promptly severed the cords binding the Moor's legs and then the strap buckled round the black, corded throat. As the strap swung away from the neck, the Moor swayed like a drunken man, and fell heavily headlong upon deck.

"I thought so," muttered the captain.

"He's dead, sir!" said the sailor, turning over the black, grinning face up to the light. "He's quite stiff."

The captain bent over the black face grinning up at him from the deck. Thin streaks of blood oozed from the rigid, gaping mouth. From the wound on the head a red stream flowed like a rivulet.

"Where's the doctor? Here, doctor, how did he die?" inquired the captain, turning to a fat little man in spectacles, who with the first mate pressed around the fallen body.

"How?"

The corpulent ship's doctor looked closely at the Moor's agonised face, gave the body a few prods, and rose from his knees.

"*Sacré cochon!*" he said. "He must have choked himself. One of the strangest things I've ever seen."

The captain gave a little grunt of inward satisfaction.

"Saved me a speech, *cré nom!*" he ejaculated, with a complacent smile. Then he gave orders to have a couple of shot attached to the Moor's feet, and when this was done, he turned round sharply to the firing-party.

"All ready there with the flag?" he sang out.

"Aye, aye, sir!" roared back the first mate, while all hands stood at attention.

The captain paused for a moment, looking out upon the shimmering sea, then swung round suddenly on his heel.

"*Allez!*" he cried with magnificent *brio*, taking off his cap.

"*Vive la France!*"

The blare of trumpets sounding the *réveillé* leapt forth in answer, as the black body of the Moor sank with a foaming splash into the waters, and the tricolour floated at the poop.



*Photo by]*

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THE INVESTMENT REGISTRY'S OFFICES IN WATERLOO PLACE, LONDON.

## MAKING THE POUND DO ITS UTMOST.

BY ROBERT BARR.

*Photographs by W. H. Bunnett.*

MANY years ago a friend of mine was walking down Broadway, New York, with one of the richest men in America. Two motives actuated the millionaire in this promenade—firstly, he saved the twopence-halfpenny that would have been expended on a tramcar, and, secondly, he desired to make a purchase. He wished to acquire that harmless necessary article we call braces in England, and which are termed suspenders in America. He made inquiries at one shop after another, but Broadway prices ruled, and these prices were too high to suit a man who had made his millions by buying in the cheapest and selling in the dearest market. Finally he said to his companion—

“Let us cross over to Sixth Avenue and see if we can’t do better there.”

The wisdom of this move was soon illus-

trated, for the pair of braces he ultimately purchased were six cents cheaper than the price that had been asked on Broadway.

My friend, who was a poor man, was amazed at this action on the part of the millionaire, who had spent as much time and worry on the outlay of a couple of shillings as another man might have done on the expenditure of ten thousand pounds.

“Do you mean to say,” he asked, “that you have taken all this trouble merely to save six cents?”

The millionaire stopped and looked at his companion as if he could not credit him with the recklessness implied by his statement, then he drew from the pocket of his trousers, that were ultimately to be held up by these newly purchased braces, a silver dollar, and displayed it in the palm of his hand.

“Merely to save six cents?” echoed the

great man solemnly. "Young man, do you realise that one of the most difficult things in this world is to make that silver dollar earn six cents in the course of a whole year?"

At the time this walk was taken down Broadway there was being formed in London a company which was ultimately to tackle what that millionaire called one of the most difficult things in the world. Lord Ebury was the first chairman of this company, and Sir John F. L. Rolleston is chairman to-day, with Lord Elcho as one of his directors; and I very much doubt if either chairman or directors know that what their company is doing to-day in carrying out a plan of world-wide scope—a plan organised to the last decimal of perfection—was practically set in operation by that American money king

gone also, but he held instead real property that very soon became worth many times the sum he had spent in acquiring it. Then during the ensuing fat years he sold this property at the highest market price, and piled up in his vaults gold to await the next panic. All of which was perfectly legitimate, of course. He merely sold when everyone wanted to buy, and bought when everyone else wanted to sell.

I must not, however, be thought to compare the methods of a limited liability company in England with those of the individual money-maker above indicated, except in one thing, which is that in each case business was based on an accurate, un-sentimental valuation of the property to be dealt in.



OPENING AND REGISTERING THE MORNING'S MAIL.

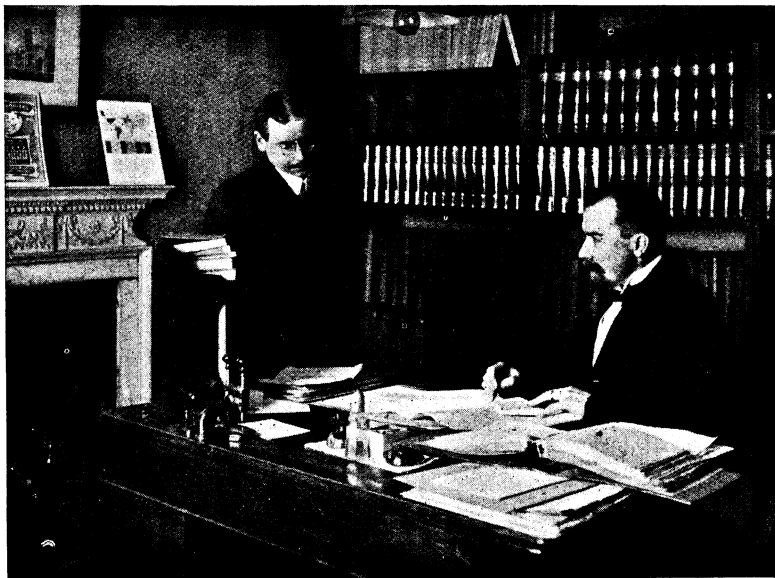
himself with equally remarkable success, but with a view solely to his own aggrandisement.

That famous millionaire never speculated or dealt in railway stocks or took risks of any kind. In his office were patiently collected full particulars of all businesses, properties, securities of any kind that might be offered him, and attached to these estimates were written the amounts he would lend to secure their control. So financially reckless is America during good times that this recklessness brings on a periodical panic, and when the panic appears, all real values seem forthwith to evaporate. Men will risk any property they possess for immediate gold. During panic after panic in the United States, the money king in question appeared to be the only man who possessed any money, and by the time the panic had gone, his money was

When a new project is brought to the attention of the public, it usually claims "to fill a long-felt want." Thirty years ago the investors of capital in the United Kingdom were experiencing a long-felt want. They were dissatisfied with methods which added greatly to the perplexity of the moderate man who loathes speculation, and simply desires a legitimate return upon his capital.

The Government appointed a Royal Commission in 1878, which in due time made recommendations that were not adopted by the Stock Exchange Committee, so the last case of the unfortunate investor remained the same as the first, and the long-felt want was still unsatisfied.

I think, without being certain, that the inauguration of the Investment Registry was due to the success of the Army and Navy

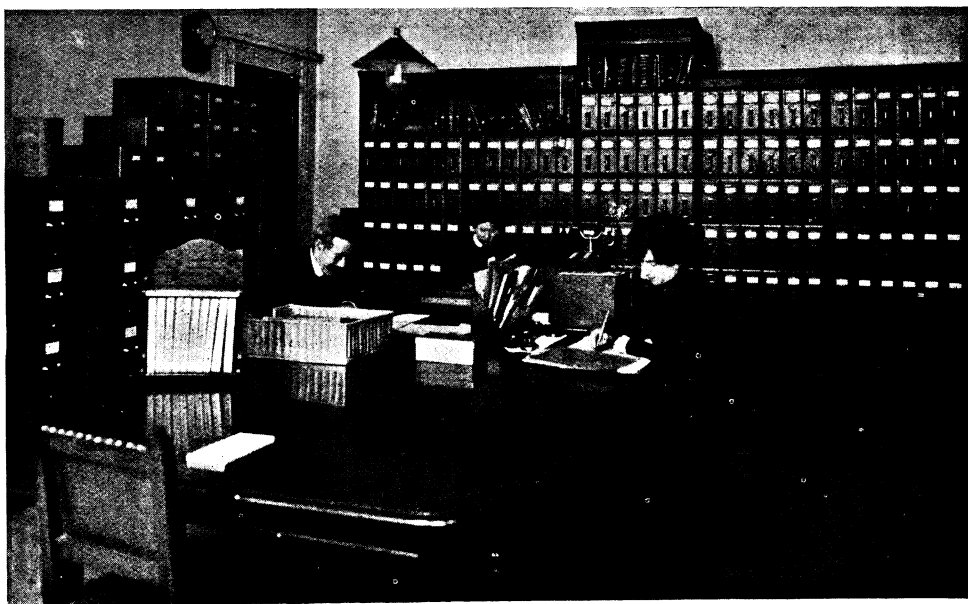


THE CHIEF STATISTICIAN AT WORK IN HIS REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Stores, and I surmise this from the fact that Lord Ebury, Chairman of the Army and Navy Stores, became first chairman of the new company, and that for many years the Investment Registry acted as Stock Exchange agents for the Army and Navy Stores.

The original intention of the company was to give advice to large private investors,

and to institutions like the Army and Navy Stores, and on these lines it enjoyed a reasonable prosperity. Its *clientèle*, however, was necessarily limited, and, of course, its advice must also have been restricted largely to the securities dealt in by the London Stock Exchange. After the Boer War there came upon Britain not a panic exactly, but a very drastic lesson. All British securities fell, some tumbling down as much as fifty per cent. It must be confessed that this took the public by surprise, for there had been a general belief that the moment peace was declared, South African stocks would jump instantly, and that others would rise in sympathy. It is still fresh in our memories how disappointingly the converse of this actually occurred.



A CORNER IN THE PURCHASE DEPARTMENT.

The wall-files extend round the room, and contain some fifteen thousand balance-sheets arranged for instant reference.



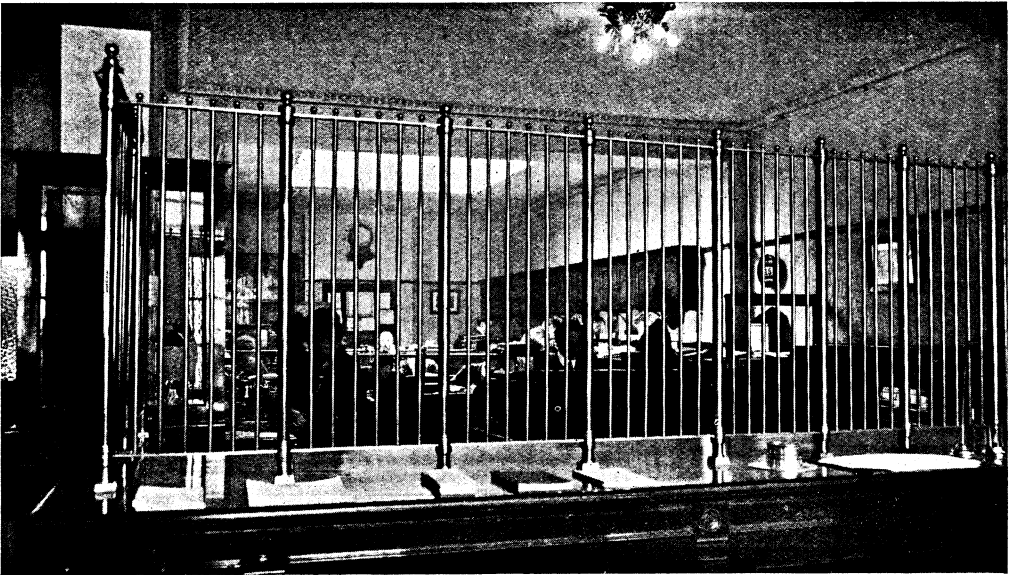
The state of things in 1900 caused all financial institutions seriously to ponder over the situation, and in no London director's room was the subject thrashed out to such practical purpose as in that belonging to the Investment Registry. There were features pertaining to the crisis that required more explanation than was forthcoming by a casual examination.

The fall of British stocks was easily accounted for. Britain had simply been spending more money than she was making during the previous few years, and the result was inevitable. But what was more difficult to explain was the fact that securities in the London market which were entirely uncon-

mate and sound, yet down came Canadian Government bonds in the general Stock Exchange *débâcle*, when logically and intrinsically these securities should have risen in price.

What was the reason? The reason appeared marvellously simple when you got down to the cause of it. It is the same reason that causes a surefooted man to fall when walking along a slippery pavement in company with a man who is not surefooted. The latter slips, grasps the other, and brings him down in company.

What is the remedy? The remedy is equally simple. Let the surefooted man walk alone, and if you have a basket of eggs



A SECTION OF THE CASH AND TRANSFER DEPARTMENT.

nected with Britain's excessive expenditure, bearing no share of responsibility, either through taxation or otherwise, depreciated in saleable value almost as seriously as British securities. Take, for instance, Canadian Government bonds. There was no reason they should fall, and every reason they should rise. Canada was coming into its own; the great Dominion was prosperous from the Atlantic to the Pacific; mines of fabulous riches were being discovered and exploited; harvests had never been so bountiful; wealthy farmers were pouring over the borders from the United States and buying the rich districts of the north-west. Canada with difficulty was suppressing a boom, and her great businesses were legiti-

mate and sound, yet down came Canadian Government bonds in the general Stock Exchange *débâcle*, when logically and intrinsically these securities should have risen in price.

And this brings us to the idea—an idea notable alike for its simplicity and for its effectiveness. If this idea had been put into operation when the Investment Registry was formed, it would by this time have saved millions of pounds to the investors of Britain. The greatest motive power in this world is an idea, and when that idea is born of deep thought and matured information, there seems scarcely any limit to what it can accomplish.

On this idea the Investment Registry has been built up until it now requires three

large adjoining houses in Waterloo Place, with nearly two hundred *employés*.

Let us, then, investigate this vital idea. A month or two ago the cable informed us a fine rain fell upon the city of New York, and before it ceased the thermometer dropped suddenly below zero, with the result that the great city was sheathed in glare ice. All vehicular traffic stopped, and of those who ventured out on foot, two hundred and fifty were carried to the hospitals with broken limbs. At the same time London was enduring grey muggy weather, but traffic

is impracticable; but co-operation, assisted by efficient organisation, makes anything possible.

The Investment Registry has divided the world into ten divisions: first, British; second, British Colonies; third and fourth, Europe (north and south); fifth, Asia; sixth, Africa; seven, eight, and nine, America (north, central, and south); ten, international stocks.

It must not be supposed that this idea came into being instantaneously, as one might say. It is rather the result of a slow building up that took years to bring into maturity, for although it is twelve years



A DEPARTMENT CONTAINING THE STOCK EXCHANGE LISTS OF EVERY IMPORTANT CITY IN THE WORLD.

was going on as usual, while in Tokio the inhabitants were enjoying brilliant sunshine.

Physical conditions have their counterpart in financial conditions. Start from London and travel round the world, and you will find that you pass out of the trade influences of London, through zone after zone, each zone being dominated by a differing financial centre. The root idea, then, is that you invest your money in various zones, no one of which is seriously affected by what happens in another. This the large investor would find difficult to do for himself, while to the small investor, acting alone, the plan

since the idea germinated, it has been in full operation for five years only, but the company now superintends upwards of thirty million pounds of invested capital belonging to its shareholders and customers.

I have given here, in my own words, merely the root idea. Its ramifications are important and intricate. For example, the investors themselves are divided into zones by the Investment Registry, and are classified according to their needs.

It must be remembered that this company has nothing whatever to do with speculation. Its business is solely investment. It does

not even hold stock for its client, but passes it over to his bank, receiving the money only when the securities are in his own possession.

It classifies investors into three groups, the first composed of investors who rely entirely for their maintenance upon the income produced by their investments; group second, composed of those who live partly on their present efforts, partly on the money produced by their investments; group third, investors who live entirely upon the results of their present efforts. In group one there are four divisions; in groups two and three there are three divisions each. Thus investors, like the world, are divided into ten zones.



*Photo by]*

*[Bassano.*

SIR JOHN F. L. ROLLESTON, M.P., D.L.,

*Chairman of the Company.*

It is impossible within the space of a short article to show in any degree of fulness what the company does for an investor belonging to one of the ten divisions, and how the company in turn divides him among two or more of its ten geographical zones; but a walk through the extensive premises in Waterloo Place, with an efficient guide, will teach an inquirer more in an hour than he could learn by a week's reading.

The ground floor differs nothing in appearance from an ordinary City bank. The first floor contains rooms for Sir John F. L. Rolleston, Lord Elcho, and the other directors.

The first room entered on the third floor has its walls decorated with paste-board file cases that open like a book, hanging overlapping each other in rows extending from the ceiling to the floor, and visible in strong black letters at the top of each is the name of the city to which it pertains. These cases represent every city in the world possessing a Stock Exchange. They are all there, from San Francisco to Singapore, and back again the other way round the earth. In each is filed the printed daily report of its Stock Exchange, and these files are being added to day by day.

Here are also card catalogues representing every city in the world where shares are sold. Selecting a town remote, or one near at hand, the card which bears its name gives the title of the agent or firm who represents the company in that city, states in what language the letter to the firm must be written, gives a list of the stocks in which they principally deal, adds cable address and names of the code-books to be used, and whatever other information may be necessary.

The centre of the room is occupied by perhaps a score of typewriter girls with their machines, and they are an interesting coterie. One is French, another Portuguese, a third Spanish, a fourth German, a fifth Italian, a sixth Russian, and so on, each language represented by its girl and typewriter, and here, for once, the babel of tongues is merged into one universal language—the purr of rapidly run typing machines.

In another room, extending from the floor to the highest point a man can reach, are files containing a series of balance-sheets of practically all the limited liability companies in the world. Name a city anywhere, and any company in that city—that is, any company which is paying dividends, for all non-producing concerns are eliminated—and the latest balance-sheet of that company is at your disposal within a few seconds.

But before a balance-sheet comes to rest in this file-room it has to pass through a very elaborate process of scrutiny. It enters a silent computing room upstairs, a room inhabited by men who are expert mathematicians. One or other of these men analyses the balance-sheet as a metallurgist assays a specimen of ore submitted to him. If there is any latent defect in that balance-sheet, the mathematician spots it. He writes his report in a paragraph anywhere from fifty to five hundred words long. Each day these reports are set up and printed on



*Photo by*

*[World's Graphic Press.*

TWO DIRECTORS, AND MANAGERS, IN CONSULTATION.

slips. A printed slip is pasted on a form, which is posted to the secretary of the company with a request to examine, correct any errors he may perceive, and return.

If the officials of the company protest against the report, or complain of its unfairness, a correspondence ensues, more detailed information is asked, and when furnished it

must be satisfactory, otherwise its unsatisfactory nature is noted and filed away with the balance-sheet. Meanwhile, if any of the Investment Registry clients are interested in this company, the final facts are instantly placed before them, and the client acts or not as he sees fit. In the archives of the Investment Registry the reputations, one



ONE OF THE POSTAL DEPARTMENTS, NEAR MAIL-TIME.

might say, of various companies are rising or falling automatically, and if the good name of any particular company falls too low, the company ceases to be represented in those files—a fact conveyed to all clients concerned. It thus often happens that long before the general public is aware of any decline in the standing of certain shares, the patrons of the Investment Registry have sold out and placed their investments elsewhere.

In another department work is strenuously going on, under the expert charge of an accountant and a solicitor, in entering and keeping up to date ingeniously devised investors' account books for the company's customers. Although thousands of investors' accounts are passing through this department periodically, the utmost care is exercised in dealing with each individual account.

As one passes through room after room, into each of which information is pouring from all directions, it begins to seem as if the whole world were at work merely for the purpose of pouring statistics into this silent, smooth-running machine—a mathematical monster that might have been created by H. G. Wells.

Nothing interested me more than the room away up at the top among the silences, where few except those who belong are allowed to enter. It might be called the chamber of criticism. Here all companies, great and small, are brought to a fraction down to the thousandth part of a unit. The mathematicians, with the full report of a company sent to them from another department, set down everything pertaining to that company that can be expressed in numerals, one column

containing the figures to the company's advantage, the other the figures to its disadvantage. There is the amount of capital subscribed, the amount paid up, the dividends declared, the assets, the liabilities—every mortal thing pertaining to the company that can be symbolised by figures. These are boiled down, boiled down, boiled down, until there results a single fraction. That fraction is the epitome of that company. If the fraction of Company A is one-third, and the fraction of Company B is two-thirds, then B is just twice as good as A.

When a new client begins to do business with the Investment Registry, his first act is generally to submit a list of his securities for criticism. The list is sent up to this room, where prices of shares and everything else are taken into consideration, and the client receives in due course the exact mathematical standing of the stocks he already possesses, a general report, and the names of other stocks, at or about the same price, which will yield a larger return or give a better security.

The feeling one brings away from this establishment is that there must be real advantage in the use of all this world-collected knowledge to anyone who hopes to receive the utmost that money can be made safely to produce. Mankind has not yet seemingly realised that the making of money and the investing of money are two very different arts, and that knowledge and experience acquired in one art are not of the least service to a man when practising the other. Indeed, the appalling losses to British investors during the last score of years are proof of this fact.



THE DINING-ROOM.

# CUPID IN MOTLEY.

By NANCY PRICE.



HE was a novelist, and she called herself Suzanne Mazarn. Her books breathed life, vigour, romance, and withal were wonderfully true to life. They appealed to young

and old alike—to the old because of the poetry that lurked in all her ideas; to the young because of the power of her love themes. She wrote of a beautiful fresh love that never flagged, that never erred, that never grew old—a love that everyone longed to know, that everyone felt, with envy, the writer herself had known and possessed. Yet Suzanne Mazarn had never been lionised; perhaps that was the secret of her charm, and the reason why her characters never lost their sweetness. A few curious folk longed to meet her, but they never got beyond writing to her publisher. Miss Suzanne Mazarn resolutely declined to be interviewed, and the tragedy or comedy that inspired her love stories remained only a conjecture.

One day—a few months after her novel "Hearts in Arcady" had appeared—she received a letter from Canada. The writer thanked Miss Mazarn for the real pleasure he had derived from her latest work. He had read all her books with pure delight, and had often desired to write to Miss Mazarn and thank her, but had not had the courage. Her last novel, however, with its wonderful descriptions of Canadian life and scenery, had swept away his timidity, and he now made bold to thank her for all the pleasure, past and present, which she, Miss Mazarn, had brought into his life. He concluded with the hope that, when Miss Mazarn again visited Canada, she would honour his native town of Winnipeg with her presence, so that he might have the pleasure of thanking her in person. The letter was signed "John Thornton."

Miss Mazarn read the letter through several times. It pleased her. She liked the handwriting; she liked the way it was written; she liked the man for having written from all that long distance. She

wrote back at greater length than was necessary. Something in her letter called for a reply, and in a few weeks Miss Mazarn was in regular correspondence with her "wild man of the woods," as she called him.

His letters were full of interest. He rarely wrote of himself, but, between the lines, she found a man such as warmed her heart—strong yet gentle, simple yet poetic, just yet generous. In a year their correspondence showed them almost intimate, in eighteen months almost affectionate.

Then came another novel from Miss Mazarn's pen. She had not told John Thornton that she was writing it. It was to be a great surprise to him. She had made him the hero, and she had called it "Rugged Grandeur." All her best work was found therein. Yet at the last moment she longed to recall it from the publishers, fearing she had not done her hero justice. He would recognise it, be offended, and communication between them would cease. For he had the pride of youth stamped on every sheet he wrote to her. It was too late, however, and the novel duly appeared. Once more the scene was set in Canada, on the shores of Lake Winnipeg. The plot was not particularly original; the beauty lay in the characterisation and the personality of the hero. Part of the story was the diary of a young girl and her meeting with a splendid young Canadian in the backwoods—the dawning of their love among mountains and waterfalls. Life, love, and strength leaped on every page.

Suzanne waited in suspense. At last the letter came. Might John Thornton have a photograph of her? He had tried all over Canada to secure one, but had failed. He had long desired one, but had resisted the temptation of asking before, fearing she would be offended. Now he must have some picture that would complete the portrait Miss Mazarn had given him of herself in "Rugged Grandeur." It was not enough for him to know that she had brown hair, grey eyes, etc. That description would live ever in his mind, but his eyes longed to see her always; and since he could not see Miss Mazarn in the flesh, he would, at any rate, possess some tangible reminder of her.

Miss Mazarn wrote back—a little stiffly—



that she had made it a rule never to be photographed.

By return came eight pages asking forgiveness, and the old relations were resumed.

Another six months, and affection had grown to tenderness. John Thornton, in one letter, said how glad he was she never mentioned the many young men who must be paying her attention. He said how wise she was for her years, and that, when she did marry, he knew it would be a wise choice.

Suzanne replied that she would never marry anyone, except an old man, because all the young men whom she met did not understand her.

Shortly after that came a brief note signed "Jack," saying that, as he was now comfortably off, he intended taking a trip to England, and as he knew her place was near Liverpool, would she, he wondered—would she come and meet him on his way to London?

Suzanne took that letter up to her room, and stared into her mirror. She saw plain Jane Smith, aged forty-five, prematurely grey, prematurely wrinkled. A life devoted to her work had taken heavy toll. Welling tears hid the depths in her blue eyes. So this was the end of her romance! It was the just punishment for her deception. Yet it was hard to bear. If only he had remained in Winnipeg, their romance might have gone on for ever. To him she would always have been a girl of twenty-six, and beautiful to the eye.

In a few days she was to punish her hero for no fault that he had committed; that was the hardest of all. But he must know the truth; it would be a greater wrong still to shirk the meeting and leave him in ignorance. It would make greater wreckage than ever of his life. She would go and meet him and show him the truth.

The fatal day arrived. In spite of herself, she dressed with extra care, and went many times for a final look into the mirror. At the last moment she changed into her oldest clothes, and set out to join the waiting crowds at the docks. Her heart beat so loud that it drowned the shouting, the noise, the tears and laughter. Suzanne felt lonelier than ever as she scanned the excited faces round her. She took up her stand by the gangway, and waited for what seemed to her hours as the stream of passengers and friends filed backwards and forwards. There was no one resembling her hero. She felt she would recognise him at once, and a thousand fears oppressed her as she pictured accidents that might have befallen him.

Suddenly her eye fell on some hand luggage which a porter was carrying. The magic words "John Thornton" were inscribed in his handwriting on the labels. Beside the porter trotted a small man, heavily muffled up, fussing for his keys.

Jane involuntarily called his name: "John Thornton." The little man stopped short and looked at her. "Are you from Miss Mazarn?"

Jane hesitated. "Ye—es," she said.

"How kind of you to come!" He took off his hat, revealing a bald head. "I hope Miss Mazarn is not ill?"

"No," said Jane.

"Business?" queried the little man.

"Yes," trembled Jane. "She asked me to meet you."

The little man looked crestfallen, but he recovered himself quickly. "Any friend of Miss Mazarn will, I hope, soon be a friend of mine. I know no one in England. I am going to stay in Liverpool for a few days." He paused and looked inquiringly at her. "Would you do me the honour of lunching with me?" He had the kindest eyes in the world. She would. They made the appointment and she left him abruptly.

Later they met at lunch. At first they talked on general subjects; after a while conversation flagged, and the little man crumbled his bread.

At length he continued. "Miss Smith," he said, "you seem to be Miss Mazarn's most intimate friend. I have a confession to make to her that you have probably guessed already."

Jane's eyes nearly twinkled.

"I have been guilty of a grave deception, involuntary yet fascinating. You know, I imagine, what Miss Mazarn expects me to be. Will you tell her for me what I really am—that I am old enough to be her father, that I asked her to meet me at Liverpool in order to disillusion her, but now I am such a coward that I am going to run away from the consequences of my deception? Will you also tell her"—here the kind eyes wore an expression of wonderful tenderness—"that the romance of the last three years has been a beautiful oasis in a monotonous life?"

"Yes, I will tell her that," said Jane quietly.

"Do you know what my life has really been?" said the little man in a hard voice. "I have made a small fortune in raisins."

A silence fell between them.

Jane was the first to break it. "Am I to

understand," she asked, "that you do not wish to meet Miss Mazarn?"

"Say, rather, that I dare not meet Miss Mazarn," he answered pathetically. "Miss

"Jane Smith," came the answer.

Their eyes met across the table, and for a few minutes the gloomy room was disturbed by peals of laughter from an elderly



*Dudley Tennant*

"Are you from Miss Mazarn?"

Smith, I feel as if I had known you a long time. Do you think very badly of me? I hope not, as I should like to see you again—often."

"That rests with you," she answered.

"Miss Mazarn gave me a message for you."

"Did she?"

"Yes; she wishes me to tell you that her real name is not Suzanne Mazarn."

"Oh, what is it?" he asked indifferently.

gentleman with a bald head and a pathetic little woman of middle age.

\* \* \* \* \*

Six months later Mr. and Mrs. John Thornton visited certain mountains and waterfalls of which Mr. Thornton had heard much from customers who purchased his raisins, and of which Mrs. Thornton had often dreamed in a back street in Liverpool.

# BLACK SWAMP.

BY CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS,

*Author of "Kings in Exile," "The House in the Water," "The Backwoodsmen," etc.*



HE brook, which had rattled down so gaily, with many a laughing rapid and clattering white cascade, from the sunlit granite terraces of Lost Mountain, fell silent and hung back as it drew near the swamp.

Wheeling in slow, deep, purple-dark eddies, it loitered for some hundred yards or so between dim overhanging ranks of alder, then sank reluctantly beneath an arch of mossed cedar-roots, and was lost in the heavy gloom.

Within the swamp the huge and ancient trunks of cedar and tamarack crowded in a sort of desperate confusion. Of great girth at the base, some towered straight up, seeking to get their tops out into the sunlight, under those sparse patches of far-off, indifferent sky. Others slanted ponderously, and laid upon their neighbours the responsibility of supporting their burden of massive branches. Yet others, undermined in youth by some treachery of the slough, lay prone above the water-holes for a portion of their length, and then turned skyward, ineffectually, as if too late awakened from their sluggish dreams. The roots of the trees were half uncovered—immense, coiled, uncouth, dull - coloured shapes, like monsters struggling up from the teeming primeval slime.

In truth, there was a suggestion of something monstrous in all that the eye could see in Black Swamp. The heavy, indeterminate masses of dark mud, or patches of black water, lying deep between and under the contortions of the roots; the thick, grey rags of dead cedar-bark; the rotting stumps, some uprooted and half engulfed in the inert morass; the overpowering windless shadow, which lay thick as if no sound had ever jarred it; above all, the gigantic tangle of trunks and roots, stagnantly motionless, with the strained stillness that is not of peace, but of a nightmare. From a branch of one of the sullen trunks hung a globe of lightest-grey papery substance, with a round hole in the bottom of it. In and out of this

hole moved two venomous streams of black-and-white hornets.

Suddenly it seemed as if the spirit of the monstrous solitude had taken substance, and was moving among the inert shapes of root and trunk. A massive fur-clad beast, dull black in colour, with high, humped haunches and heavy, shapeless limbs, its hind feet grotesquely semi-human in outline, its head swinging low on a long, clumsy neck, came picking its way with a loose-jointed gait over the jumble of roots. With little, twinkling, deep-set eyes it peered beneath each root, investigated each crevice in the ancient bark, looking for grubs and beetles, which its great paws captured with amazing though awkward-looking dexterity. For so huge a beast as the great black bear, which could pull down an ox, to busy himself in the hunting of grubs and beetles seemed one of the whimsicalities of Nature, who pursues her ends indifferently through mammoth or microbe.

Near the tree of the hornets the bear found a half-rotten stump. Sniffing at it with instructed nose, he decided that it held grubs. Clutching at it with his long, hooked claws, he tore away one side of it, revealing a mellow-brown, crumbly interior channelled by wood-grubs in every direction. Those which were in view on the erect portion of the stump he first picked out delicately and devoured with satisfaction. Then he turned his attention to the big slab which he had ripped away, and which lay on a hummock of firm ground at his feet.

But the bear was not the only connoisseur of grubs in Black Swamp. Some dozen inches before his nose a particularly fat maggot was squirming in the shallow remnant of its chamber, dismayed at its sudden exposure to the air. The bear was just on the point of picking it up, when it was pounced upon by one of the great black-and-white hornets, as a hawk might pounce on a rabbit. Pricked with the tip of the hornet's sting, the fat grub lashed itself out in one convulsive squirm, and then lay still. Straddling over it, the hornet rolled it together cleverly, then, plunging her mandibles into its soft body, proceeded to drain its juices.

For some moments the bear had watched this performance with curious interest, his little eyes twinkling wickedly. Now he had had enough of the show. Stretching out one mighty paw, he laid it down deliberately on the hornet and her prey. For a moment he left it there, as if his act had been one of considered punishment. Then, withdrawing the paw, he eyed the flattened insect, and proceeded to swallow her and her victim together.

But the hornet was not quite dead, for the rotten wood was soft and full of unevennesses; and this insect, with its burnished black body barred with creamy white, was no mere peppery little "yellow-jacket" wasp, but the great hornet of the woods, whose sting can pierce the hide of the moose. No sooner had the bear picked up the dangerous morsel than he spat it out again with a *woof* of surprise, and ground it into nothingness with an angry sweep of his paw. Then he fell to shaking his head, clawing awkwardly at his mouth, and whining a fretful protest at the sting. Lumbering down to a swamp-hole close by, he plunged his muzzle again and again into the chill black mud. After a brief period of this treatment, he returned to the stump and went on with his banquet of grubs, stopping every now and then to shake his head and grumble deep in his throat. When another big hornet, catching sight of the feast, pounced upon a grub, he smashed her and ground her up instantly, without caring how many tasty morsels were annihilated in the process.

When the stump had been quite torn to pieces, and every maggot extracted from it, the bear moved on to the tree of the hornets. He did not notice the nest, for he did not take the trouble to look up. If he had done so, being in a rage against the venomous tribe, he might, perhaps, have had the rashness to climb the tree and declare a doubtful war. As it was, he noted only that between two great roots, which sprang out like buttresses from the base of the trunk, there was a space of dry earth, covered with the minute elastic needles of the tamarack. Here he threw himself down with a grunt, and fell to rubbing his face with his thick forepaws.

But he was restless, the old bear—either because the grubs had not satisfied his hunger, or because the sting of the hornet still rankled in his jaw. Almost immediately he got up upon his haunches, and stared all about, sniffing, with his nose in the air. The monstrous confusion of roots and

trunks, monotonously repeating itself as far as he could see through the shadow, appeared to offer him nothing worth his attention. But presently he lurched forward, as if he had made up his mind what to do. Shambling grotesquely, but picking his way above the slime as delicately as a cat, he kept on for perhaps a hundred yards. Perhaps his nostrils had caught, across the stagnant air, the tang of running water. It was running water that he came to, for the brook, though often foiled, often diverted, often turned back upon itself, and almost lost, had succeeded in saving for itself a clean channel through the water-holes and chaos of the swamp.

Just at this point the brook ran through a dark but living pool, brown, but transparent, with here and there a gleam of elusive light, as in the eyes of some dark-eyed women. To this pool, and others like it strung here and there through the swamp, had gathered many fish, trout, suckers, and chub, fleeing the too direct rays of the high midsummer sun.

Lumbering down the sticky bank, the bear squatted himself on his haunches close to the edge of the water, and stared at it fixedly. After a time his eyes began to discern the fish which thronged in its deep centre. Having assured himself that the fish were there, he lay down on his stomach, in a hunched, shapeless position, with his face close to the water and one paw uplifted. It looked like a difficult position to hold, but the bear held it, motionless as one of the great roots, and quite as inert-looking, till by and by some of the fish, which had been frightened away by his coming, swam slowly back to the weedy edges to feed. These fish were suckers, weed-eaters, thick-bodied and sluggish in movement, very different from the swift, ravening trout. A spark flashed into the deep of the bear's eyes as he saw them coming, but not so much as the edge of a nostril quivered. A big sucker with a snout that overhung, and opened and shut greedily, came nosing the mud close up under his face. With a lightning scoop the waiting paw descended, and the fish, amid a noisy splashing, was hurled out upon the bank, half stunned. Before it could recover itself enough to flop, the bear was upon it. Picking it up between his jaws, he carried it lazily back to that dry couch he had found beneath the tree of the hornets, there to be eaten at his leisure.

While the bear, ponderous and sullen, was mumbling over his meal in that uncouth solitude, there came, moving briskly down the brook's margin, a gay little figure that

seemed an embodied protest against all the dark and enormous formlessness of the swamp. It was as if the world of sunlight, and swift motion, and bright vitality, and completed form, had sent in its herald to challenge the inertness of the gloom.

The tripping little figure was about the size of a fox, and with the long, pointed, inquisitive muzzle of a fox. Its abundant fur was of a cloudy, irregular yellowish-grey, darkening at the tips, and shading to almost black along the back. Its tail was long, light, and vividly barred with black. Its dainty, fine-clawed, hand-like feet were bright black. But the most striking thing about it was its face, which was very light grey, with a large black patch around each eye like an exaggerated pair of spectacles. The eyes themselves were extraordinarily large, dark, and lustrous, and glowed with a startling, almost impish intelligence.

The racoon was not given, as a rule, to daytime prowlings, his preference being for moonlight rather than sunlight. Nor, usually, was he given to haunting the sinister recesses of Black Swamp. But he was a wanderer, and capricious as all vagabonds; and he had somehow discovered that there were crawfish in the brook where it flowed through the swamp. He was an ardent fisherman, deft and unerring with his hand-like claws. But to-day his fishing was unsuccessful, for never a crawfish was so considerate as to come his way. He saw the suckers and trout gathered at the mid-deeps of the pools, but he was too impatient, or not really hungry enough, to wait for them to come near shore. While he was watching beside the big pool wherein the bear had recently fished with such success, a wood-mouse unwarily came out of its hole, just at his feet, and was captured before it had time to see its peril. This prize contented the racoon. Having killed his victim instantly with a cheerful nip behind the ears, he sat by the pool's edge and proceeded to souse the morsel vigorously up and down in the water before eating it. Not until it was washed almost to a rag did he seem to think it clean enough to eat, and then, after all his trouble, he nibbled hardly the half of it, flinging the remnant into the water with the air of a wasteful child who has never known what it feels like to go hungry.

From the edge of the brook the racoon ran up the bank. After a pause he turned aimlessly into the still turmoil of the trunks and roots. Every fallen trunk, every long tentacle of a root that he came to, he would mount it and run along it to the end in what-

ever direction it led. As the luck of the wild would have it, this erratic progress brought him presently to one of the great buttressing roots of the tree of the hornets. He mounted it, of course, followed it nearly to the base of the trunk, and stopped abruptly at the sight of the bear.

The bear, who had but recently finished his meal of fish, was lying half asleep on the dry tamarack needles between the roots. He had well eaten, but the sting in his mouth still fretted him, and his mood was ugly. His great head was moving sullenly, ponderously, from side to side. Ominous and dark and ill-shapen, he looked strangely like a portion of the swamp come alive. The racoon scrutinised him with eyes of bright, mischievous disdain. The bear, looking up, caught sight of him, and aimed a treacherous blow at him with his tremendous, armed forepaw. Light as a feather, the racoon avoided him. It was as if the very wind of the blow had swept him from the place of danger. The bear grunted at his failure, and fell to licking his paw. The racoon, who had slipped around the tree, mounted another root, and gazed at his rude assailant impishly. Then, glancing upwards, his liquid eyes detected the pendant grey globe of the hornets' nest, pale in the gloom.

The racoon knew that inside every hornets' nest or wasps' nest at this time of the year was a mass of peculiarly succulent larvæ and immature insects. If this grey globe had been a wasps' nest, he might, perhaps, have attacked it at once, his long hair, thick skin, and skill in protecting his eyes, enabling him to brave, without too great cost, the stings of the ordinary "yellow-jacket." But he noted well the formidable insects which hummed about this nest; he knew the powers of the black-and-white hornet. Having stared at the nest for several minutes, he seemed to come to some decision. Thereupon he tripped off delicately over the tree-roots to the brook, to resume his hunt for crawfish.

It was by this time getting late in the afternoon. As the gloom deepened at the approach of twilight, the bear went to sleep. The darkness fell thicker and thicker, till his breathing bulk could no longer be distinguished from the trunk beside it. Then, from narrow openings in the far-off tree-tops fell here and there a ray of white moonlight, glassy clear, but delusive. Under the touch of these scant rays, every shrouded mystery of the swamp took on a sort of malignant life.



“Proceeded to souse the morsel vigorously up and down in the water.”



About this time the racoon came back. In that phantom illumination, more treacherous than the dark, his wide eyes, nearly all pupil, saw as clearly as in the daylight. They gleamed elvishly as they took note of the sleeping bear. Then they glanced upward toward the hornets' nest, where it hung just crossed by one chill white pencil of a moon ray. Softly their owner ran up the tree, his delicate claws almost inaudible as they clutched the roughness of the bark.

At the base of the slim branch—hardly more than a twig, but alive and tough—which held the nest of the hornets, the racoon stopped. He wanted the contents of that nest. But he did not want to test the prowess of its guardians, which were now, as he well knew, all within, too heavy with sleep to fly, but as competent as ever to sting. After some moments of deliberation, he bit the twig through and let the nest fall. Then he scrambled hastily down the tree, as if eager to see what would happen.

His purpose, perhaps, in dropping the nest was simply a wanton impulse to destroy what he desired but could not have. Perhaps he thought the nest would roll into a shallow pool at the other side of the tree, and so drown its occupants, after which he might rifle it at his own convenience. Or, possibly, he calculated that that would happen which presently did. The nest fell, not into the water, but between the up-curved forepaws, and very close to the nose, of the slumbering bear.

The bear, awakened and startled by its light fall, growled and bit angrily at the intruding nest. At the same time, with an instinctive clutch, he ripped it open, not realising just what it was. The next instant he knew. With a *woof* of rage, he tried to crush it and all its envenomed populace within it. But he was too late. The great hornets were already swarming over him, crawling, burrowing deep into the fur about his face and neck and belly. Furiously they plunged and replunged their long, flame-like stings. His eyes and muzzle crawled with the fiery torment. Clawing, striking, snapping, grunting, whimpering, he rolled over and over in desperate effort to rid himself of the all-pervasive attack. But the foes he crushed had already left behind their poison in his veins. For a few moments his monstrous contortions went on, while in a glassy patch of white light, on the trunk above, clung the racoon, gazing down upon him with liquid, elvish eyes. At length, quite

beside himself with the torment, he reared upon his hindquarters, battling in the air. Then he lunged forward, and went scrambling headlong over the slippery black jumble of roots.

The great beast's first impulse, one may guess, was simply that of flight, of mad effort to escape from foes whom he could not cope with. Having no heed of his direction, the blind guidance of trunk and root led him around in a rough circle, till he came almost back to the tree of his fate. Between him and the tree, however, lay a spacious patch of morass, fairly firm on the surface, but, underneath, a slough of viscous mud. His eyes almost closed by the stings, the bear plunged straight forward into this morass. His first instinct was to struggle frantically back, but, as he fell, his nose had dipped into the mud. The chill of it was like a balm to his tortured nostrils and lips. This, indeed, was what he wanted. He wallowed straight ahead, plunging his face deep into the icy slime. The drench of it soothed the scorching of his stung belly. The anguish of his eyelids was assuaged. Again and again, buried now to his shoulders, he thrust his face into the ooze. Then, with the salving of his torment, his senses seemed to return. He tried to wallow back to firm ground.

The swamp, as we have seen, was in all things monstrous. It was monstrous now to its offspring and victim, in warning him too late. The patch of morass was of great depth, and the bear was sucked under so swiftly that, even as he turned to escape, he sank to the neck. His huge forepaws beat and clawed at the stiffer surface, breaking it down into the liquid ooze beneath. Presently they also were engulfed. Only his head remained above the mud. His gaping muzzle, strained straight upward, emitted hideous gasps and groans. A beam of moonlight lay across the scene, still and malignant, and the racoon watched from the tree with an untriumphant curiosity. When at last that terrible and despairing head had vanished, and nothing remained but a long convulsion of the mud, the racoon came daintily down from his post of observation, and examined the remains of the hornets' nest. It was crushed and pounded quite too flat to be of any further interest to him, so, after a disdainful wrinkling of his fine black nose, he tripped away to seek again the world to which he belonged—the world of free airs, and dancing leaves, and clamouring waters, and bright, swift, various life, and yellow moonlight over the fields of corn.

# BIANCA'S DAUGHTER.

By JUSTUS MILES FORMAN,

*Author of "The Garden of Lies," "Tommy Carteret," "The Quest," etc.*

**SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.**—The two Blakes, father and son, shared most of each other's tastes and moods—for the two men had been a great deal together for some ten years after the son had left the University, and had travelled much together in remote parts of the world—and out of their very sympathy the younger man, Richard Blake, became aware that his father seemed strangely oppressed with either physical pain or mental anxiety in the midst of Mrs. Cartwright's ballroom, and this impression seemed due to the sudden pointing out of a *débutante*, a Miss Vittoria Fleming, whose rare beauty was the talk of the room. But the older man declared himself only bored, after all, and Richard speedily forgot the circumstance in the new interest of dance and conversation with the beautiful Miss Fleming, who had hitherto lived all her life at the country seat of her father. On her mother's side she was descended from a distinguished Italian family, but since that mother's death her father, Pender Fleming, had lived the life of a complete recluse, and Bianca's daughter was now entering the larger world beyond her Hampshire home for the first time. She and Richard Blake at this first meeting became conscious of some influence binding their lives together for good or ill, but on his return home from the dance, Blake found his father anxious to persuade him to embark on a long foreign cruise. He talked to his father of the dance and of the arresting beauty and rare personality of Miss Fleming, only to draw from the older man an agitated entreaty that he would not allow himself to fall in love with the girl. Simultaneously Vittoria was asking her hostess many questions about the mother whom she had never known, and, incidentally, some about her new friend. Yet neither the man nor the girl learned anything that could have explained either the distress of the elder Blake or Mrs. Dudley's reluctance to answer Vittoria's questions at all frankly. Then Blake and Vittoria met again at a dinner-party, without becoming any better acquainted; but later on he happened to be in the Park when the girl's horse bolted, and succeeded in stopping the frightened animal while Vittoria cleared her foot from the stirrup by which she was being dragged, and their friendship seemed to be developed by this open moment of danger and rescue. Even then, however, circumstances prevented Blake from seeing the girl again before she left town. Vittoria was welcomed home by her father and his neighbour, Beau Temple, "the novelist of the chosen few," and her own lifelong friend, who had only been awaiting her return from her first season in the great world to ask her if she could come to look upon him as a husband. To her father, when he urged her to accept the proposal, the girl said: "I'm very fond of him. The only question is, am I fond enough, and in the right way? I dare say I am." But all the time she wondered why Richard Blake had disappeared out of her life again without word or sign. She looked ahead to her probable marriage with a calm and contented mind. Its only alternative appeared to be an indefinite continuation of her lonely life at Standish, and the months in London had taught her how intolerable that would be. Moreover, she could imagine going through life with him very happily indeed. But one day she rode over to call on the Farings, and found Blake there, on a visit, and realised the ascendancy he had established over her, yet without acknowledging it. So she returned and told Beau Temple definitely that she would marry him. Then, in the leisure of her country life, she obtained access to an unused room in which she found a portrait of the Italian mother whom she had never known, and was amazed to find how closely the picture resembled herself. Yet her father had never alluded to it. But the drama of her life was to be carried an act further by a visit from Blake, who explained his own silence and asked her to marry him. And she could but tell him that she had just accepted Beau Temple, and even as she talked with him, her father came suddenly upon them in the garden, and, in a sudden mania of rage at the presence of his enemy's son, revealed to both, for the first time, that many years before, when Vittoria was but six months old, her beautiful mother had left her strange, stern husband's home for ever and gone away with the father of Richard Blake. The extenuating circumstances were such as to inspire pity as well as grief in Vittoria's heart, but knowledge fixed a gulf between her and Blake. Yet while Temple, now realising that she cared for Blake, debated with himself and Mrs. Faring whether to release her or hold her to her promise in sheer protecting love, Blake came back into their lives, and the two men met by chance. Then Temple, having ascertained from friends who knew young Blake what a fine character he had earned for himself, not only released Vittoria from her engagement to himself, but pleaded with her father to give her back her promise to have nothing to do with the son of his enemy. But Pender Fleming was proof against all entreaties until the reminiscences of a blind Frenchman, De Coucy, of the kindness and love with which the unhappy Bianca had been surrounded in her last days induced him to consent to see Temple again on the subject.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

BUT THEY DO NOT FALL.

PENDER FLEMING went slowly back across the room, moving feebly still, like a very old man, and sat down before the great table. He was indeed spent, as he had said. He was spent physically and in mind and soul. It seemed to him that all his being ached with sore fatigue, and he leant his heavy head upon his hands, and a

sound which was like a sigh and a groan together broke from his lips.

"Let sunlight in after so much darkness!" The blind man's words said themselves over in his mind, and his lips repeated them in a soundless whisper.

"Let sunlight in after so much darkness!" Aye, he would be glad to do that. The darkness had endured too long. He was weary almost to death of it. He saw himself a sort of prisoner—self-immured in that chill

gloom, and it was hateful to him. He looked back and marvelled that he should have crouched there so many years manacled by useless sorrow and hatred and the thirst for revenge. He looked forward—that sweet and peaceful picture still in his mind—and the sunlight seemed warm and golden to him. He sat in it and held a child upon his knee. His eyes stung with quick tears.

A sudden impatience stirred him to have done with the ugly past, to make the step from night to day—strike off those manacles too long worn. He wondered why he had refused and temporised while De Coucey was with him.

“There is no time so good as now.” True words! What might not happen before the morrow!

“No time so good as now.”

Pender lifted his head, and his sodden cheeks glowed with an instant's red colour. His breath began to come fast. Why not now, then? A word, and the thing was done. The telephone instrument stood upon the table at his elbow. He made use of it to call the servants, to give orders, to transact most of his daily domestic business. He had but to lift the receiver from the hook. A voice would answer—the ancient butler's, probably. He would tell the man to find Miss Vittoria and send her to him. In five minutes the child would be in the room.

It was as easy as that.

He put out his hand towards the telephone instrument, but the hand trembled exceedingly, and he waited to steady it. He tried once more, and the hand would not stir. It was as if his brain had no control over it—as if the hand were possessed of an intelligence of its own, and resisted him. He tried again, and he was helpless. Something like anger burnt in him, and a sudden sensation of vertigo flashed across his eyes. The rebellious hand raised itself from the polished mahogany, wavered in the air, advanced an inch and retreated—fell to shaking as if in an ague. He found that he could no more touch that instrument of metal and rubber than he could have touched a blazing flame. It was impossible.

Again the wave of anger swept him, and was followed by sheer wonderment and something like panic. He thought he must be ill. Shall not a man's own limbs obey him?

There was yet another way—easier still. He could write. Half a dozen words scrawled upon paper were enough to set Vittoria free. With a sort of rush, a frenzy of haste, he

caught up his pen and dipped it. Paper lay under his hand. . . . After what may have been the space of ten minutes, or it may have been more, Pender Fleming sat back in his chair and his head dropped heavily, so that the pallid jowls were spread out upon his breast.

It was too late. He could not do it. Gyves worn for twenty years were rusted home. He could not strike them off. He was appalled at the insignificance of his strength before the night of that passion which had swayed him for so long—a little child pushing against a stone wall—an insect at the foot of a mountain.

The truth was that there was no will to change left in him, and at last he knew it clearly. The will was atrophied. He was in the grip of a thing so much stronger than himself that he could not even stir it. He was helpless.

So he sat and looked the truth in the face, gravely, without resentment, acknowledging his master. He thought of the good thing he had wished to do, but it had already begun to pale before his eyes. He regretted it but mildly. He thought of that sweet and benign picture the Frenchman had painted for him, and it seemed to him that it would have been very pleasant—in some other world, very far away. But it was not for him. It was a sort of mirage. It dimmed away and was nothing. It had never been anything but a vision—colours thrown upon empty air.

Then abruptly there came before him, unsought, unlooked for, the face of Creighton Blake and the face of Richard, his son, and the face of Donna Bianca, with anguished eyes. And at that he trembled a little and was still. There began slowly to mount along his veins, like the course of an insidious drug, the poison of the old bitter hatred—the salt, unslaked thirst for revenge. It rose about him like dark waters—like the resurgence of an inundating sea held off for a little while by flimsy dykes. It met over his head in silent waves, he drank of its bitterness, he breathed it into his lungs, it swept him away with an overwhelming, a resistless might.

There was a knocking at the study door. When it had been repeated twice, Pender heard it and said: “Come in!” The ancient butler handed him a sealed note, sent, he said, by the hand of a groom from Cedar Hill. Pender Fleming glanced at the superscription, found it unfamiliar, and tore open the envelope. He looked to the bottom of

the single sheet, saw the name there, and gave a smothered cry—afterwards sat staring before him, the paper crumpled in one unsteady hand.

After a space the servant coughed, and said that the groom from Cedar Hill was waiting to take back an answer. Then his master roused himself and read the few brief sentences.

Creighton Blake begged Mr. Fleming to accord him a half hour's interview upon a matter of great importance. He was staying, for a day or two, with friends at Cedar Hill.

Again the master of Standish fell into a fit of silent staring, but at its end looked up, and there was a strange light in his pale eyes before which the old servant found himself oddly uncomfortable. He said—

"Tell the messenger to say to this—gentleman—that I shall be glad to receive him, *with his son*, to-morrow at three."

The ancient butler said: "Very good, sir!" and went out of the room, closing the door.

Behind him Pender Fleming broke into a fit of dreadful laughter.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### OUTSIDE THE STUDY DOOR.

DURING that evening Richard Blake called Vittoria up by 'phone and told her that his father was at Cedar Hill, had communicated with Pender Fleming, and that the two of them were to come by appointment on the next afternoon to Standish. It was, of course, the first hint she had of the matter, and excited her hugely. She had put no belief at all in the possibility of her father's retreat. Despite Beau Temple's words, she had hardly given it a moment's thought, for it seemed to her quite incredibly inconsistent with Pender's character. She considered that she knew him too well for that. It would require, she said to herself, some gigantic force to move that strange being, and she could not see where the gigantic force was to come from. The old catch phrase came to her mind, and she smiled over it. When an irresistible force meets an immovable object, what will result? What, indeed? Pender Fleming seemed to her to be about as immovable as anything she knew of. What was the irresistible force? And even if it came, what then? The old catch question has never been solved.

She thought of Beau Temple and the broken friendship, but shook her head. A permanent break there would hurt her father shrewdly, but would it move him? No, not twenty broken friendships, had he such. What was it, then, that had happened? Creighton Blake had asked for an interview, and Pender had consented to see him—together with his son! She could not understand it at all, and she began to grow uneasy. The acquiescence had been too ready. It was very unlike Pender—unless, perhaps, he had something up his sleeve. That would be like him, very like!

She was still standing near the telephone, some ten minutes later, when the bell rang again, and it was Beaumont Temple at Lone Tree Hill. He had to tell her of De Coucy's interview, which the blind Frenchman had faithfully reported to him upon arriving at home, and while he had, of course, to condense a good deal, he told her the gist of what had passed between the two men.

"I really think Pender is breaking up," Temple said. "It seems almost incredible, but I believe he's giving way. Have you seen him?"

She said no, but told of the meeting arranged for the morrow, and at that Temple gave an exclamation of surprise, and was silent for a little while. At last he said—

"Without in the least knowing why, I don't quite like it. To be sure, it sounds like a definite surrender—kisses all round and general hilarity, but—I don't know. He's piling it on. It's a bit too thick. I should be better pleased with less apparent eagerness. I wonder if Pender's digging a mine of any sort!"

"I don't quite like it, either," said Vittoria. "I'm afraid a little. I don't trust him. I wish you'd come to-morrow, too, Beau. You needn't enter the house, you know."

"Oh, I mean to come!" he said. "Didn't I tell you? He has sent for me. De Coucy and I are both to come, though no hour was set. That's what I was thinking about. Pender's piping all hands to quarters. Maybe, it's surrender, and maybe it's fight. I wish I knew which. But I'm no prophet." He was once more silent for a space, while the girl waited, but said finally—

"I think I'll just have out a nag and ride to Cedar Hill this evening. I should like to talk it over with the Blakes. And, in any event, I'll turn up at Standish to-morrow between two and three. I dare say we're both paying the old gentleman a dashed

poor compliment, you know, in suspecting him. I dare say it's quite all right, and that he means to do the handsome thing to-morrow. Let's believe it, anyhow. We shall sleep the better. Good night, child!"

Vittoria said—

"Good night, Beau dear. Yes, I dare say you're right." But she turned away from the telephone with an unsmiling face, and went soberly upstairs to her own chamber. She was aware that she ought to be full of a hopeful and happy excitement, but she was not: she was full of foreboding.

What had that fateful morrow in store for her?

She had got ready for bed, but, finding that sleep was out of the question, took up a book and read in it until her eyes were heavy with fatigue. Then at last she put out the lights and lay down. It was just midnight. The wind was from the direction of the village, and she heard the faint sound of chimes, and then twelve thin, clear strokes. Afterwards she heard the half hour, and after that one o'clock. Then at last sleep came, and she dreamed a happy dream and awoke in the golden morning refreshed.

Imaginative fears, heavy enough overnight, rarely can face the morning sun. They flee away with the shadows. Vittoria's fears fled before the light of that fresh and fragrant day. If they did not entirely vanish, they retreated to a very polite distance, and sat down there quite quietly, making themselves as inconspicuous as they could. The girl's mind went back over what she called the accumulation of evidence, and, despite her natural distrust of all Pender Fleming's motives (alas, that such a distrust should have found place in her! but the man had put it there), in spite of her knowledge of his unbending nature, she believed that at last her father was about to give way. What it was that had moved him she could not imagine—perhaps Beau Temple's wrath, perhaps the blind Frenchman's eloquence. In any case, he seemed to be about to do all that a man could do to repair ancient wrongs, and she was ashamed that she had distrusted him.

She threw a kiss to her beautiful mother and went down to breakfast. After that she took a little walk with Mr. Hennessy, but returned presently to her walled garden, and sat there for the remainder of the morning, reading a parcel of new magazines which had just arrived, and devouring the small pink box of Russian chocolates which she had taken out there some days before, and

had then forgotten. A maid had rescued them and carried them back to the house, and they were very stale, but Vittoria had periods of being a thrifty young soul, and could not bear to throw away even stale chocolates so long as they were edible at all.

The hour between half-past twelve and half-past one she employed quite happily up in her room, engaged in personal decoration—with ravishing results—lunched at the end of this time, and, soon after two, went out upon the deep side-verandah to await the first of the expected visitors.

\* \* \* \* \*

The first proved to be Beaumont Temple and M. de Coucy, who drove over from Lone Tree Hill, arriving promptly at half-past two. Temple was flushed and eager—in prodigious spirits. The day would seem to have driven away his vapours of doubt as well as Vittoria's. He shook her hands for a long time and insisted upon kissing her on both cheeks.

"It may be my last chance," he said, but could not look sorrowful, though he tried. "In an hour's time I may have to fight Richard Blake for that privilege. Vittoria, my good woman, I believe we've pushed Pender—the old curmudgeon!—to the brink of the precipice. I believe he's going to make the jump. I was doubtful last night, but I feel cheerfuller to-day. I believe he means to give way."

"And I too, mademoiselle," said the blind Frenchman. "I believe it also. I offer my felicitations in advance."

Vittoria began to try to say how grateful she was to him for what he had done, and Temple turned away to ring for a servant, saying over his shoulder that he would get a word with Pender before the Blakes should arrive. Old Griggs came at his ring, and Temple sent him to announce that he and M. de Coucy had called.

The man was gone some minutes, then returned, a little flushed, and avoiding Beau Temple's eye. Mr. Griggs had so few demands made upon his diplomatic qualities that they had become, as it were, atrophied.

"Mr. Fleming is asleep, sir," he said nervously, "and I daren't waken him before three o'clock, begging your pardon, sir. He hasn't been well, and he left strict orders, so the valet says, that he wasn't to be wakened until three. There's two gentlemen expected then—Mr. Blake and Mr. Richard Blake. If you could wait until three, sir? I'm very sorry——"



“‘What was that?’ she said in a whisper.”



"Yes," said Beau Temple slowly. "Yes, to be sure. Quite so. I'll wait, thanks. That's all, Griggs." The butler slipped away with what sounded very like a sigh of relief, but Temple stood for some little time looking after him with a puzzled frown.

"Won't see us until after he's seen the Blakes!" he said to himself. "That's odd. . . . Why? . . . Has Pender something up his sleeve, after all? I wonder, now."

He turned back towards the others, and Vittoria asked him if he was going in at once to see her father. He said—

"No, not yet. Pender's having a nap, so Griggs tells me. We'll wait until the Blakes come."

So they sat down and talked together, and, in ten or fifteen minutes, the Blakes, father and son, arrived in a motor from Cedar Hill. Vittoria had thought it possible that Béatrix Faring might come with them, but she did not; the men were alone.

They came at once round the house to the open verandah, for they had seen the three people there, and Vittoria met them at the top of the low steps.

The younger Blake was not at all the sort of man to betray emotion in public. When he was at great heights or depths of feeling, he merely looked grim, save that his eyes were eloquent to those who took the trouble to meet them. He looked grim as he came up the steps of the verandah at Standish, and his hand, when Vittoria's took it, was rather cold. She was aware that her own hand was trembling. Blake said in a low tone—

"At last, I think." And she answered—

"Yes, I think so, Richard. I think it's—all right at last." They stood looking at each other for a moment with a singular gravity—as well they might do, for the whole of their future lives hung in a balance. Then the young man said—

"May I present my father to you?" and gave way for Creighton Blake, who had been standing behind him.

The elder man bared his head and came a step forward. He made a very courtly and old-fashioned bow, without offering his hand, but Vittoria put out her two hands to him, and he took them. She said—

"I saw you once at a distance, sir—across a ballroom." And Creighton Blake said—

"I remember."

Rather oddly there flashed into the girl's mind that scene in the walled garden, when her father had first caught sight of Richard Blake and had thought him a phantom of the past. She looked now upon this melan-

choly, white-haired man, with his scored and furrowed face, and it seemed to her incredible that only twenty years past he had been enough like Richard to make possible such a mistake as that. But as she looked upon him longer, she began to see that the features of father and son were in truth the same, the height alike, that they had the same trick of carrying their heads. She was appalled to see how grief could ravage and destroy. She turned her head for an instant and saw that her lover had joined Beaumont Temple and M. de Coucy at the other end of the porch—out of earshot. Then she said—

"I sent you a message by Richard. Did he give it you?"

The white-haired man bent his head. "It was all that is kind—all that is sweet."

"I wanted you to know how I felt," said she. "I couldn't bear to have you think that, when I found out, I—blamed. I wanted you to know that I was glad—glad!"

Creighton Blake's worn face stirred a little. He looked down upon the girl with a sort of pathetic hunger, and she heard him say under his breath—

"Bianca's child!" He said it two or three times. And afterwards he said aloud—

"You are so like her that it is a kind of miracle. I knew that when I saw you the first time across a ballroom. But you were a child then—unmoved, untouched at heart. Love has been at work since. Now—it is hard to believe that you are not Bianca."

He filled his lungs with a deep breath and seemed to straighten his shoulders.

"I must let your—let Mr. Fleming know I am here. I must send in my name." He met the girl's eyes once more, with a grave smile.

"Never fear!" said he. "We shall set you free here to-day. You and the boy shall be free to live out—what—couldn't be lived before. It's meant to be. I'm convinced of that. At first, when Richard first met you, I was sorry—afraid. I tried to take him away with me. I foresaw all this opposition. I thought unhappiness would come of it—broken hearts—more tragedy upon the old tragedy. But it was meant to be. Neither Pender nor I could stop it—nothing! It had to be. Please Heaven, it may end in joy and lifelong happiness. She'll look down on it and see—and be glad, I think."

He turned away before the girl could speak. Richard Blake came forward to meet him, and they went towards one of the

three long windows which stood open into the house. At just that moment old Griggs appeared, coming out, and spoke to Creighton Blake. Vittoria saw the man nod his head, and after a moment he followed the servant indoors.

Richard turned back to where she was and said—

"Mr. Fleming wants to see my father alone for a few moments, and then wants me to join them. Shall I wait out here?"

"We might go inside," said she, "and wait in the hall. Oh, Richard! Richard!" She had begun to be seized by spasms of shivering, as if she were cold, and she found that her breath came and went irregularly and fast. They walked together into the drawing-room upon which the verandah gave, and crossed it to the chief entrance hall. There was a low stair landing opposite the door, up only three or four steps, broad, with a row of six casemented windows, and a long cushioned bench beneath them. The glass of the windows was coloured, and had been brought by Pender Fleming's father from a dismantled German chapel of the fifteenth century. It told the story of the Prodigal Son in six quaint and rather absurd panels.

"We'll wait on the stair landing," Vittoria said, "and then you can go to my father immediately he sends word." She told the ancient Griggs, who was hovering near, where they would be, and they went up to the window embrasure. It faced the west, and the afternoon sun, filtering through the leaves of a beech outside, had begun to send slanting beams here and there through the pictured glass.

Vittoria stood still for a moment before seating herself, and the sunbeams fell across her head and breast and lay about her feet on the floor—billets and lozenges of *azure* and *gules* and *or*. The man's heart was wrung with an intolerable ache of love and sheer delight at her splendid beauty, standing so, bathed in jewelled light. It was more poignant than a sharp pain.

She turned her head, saw him staring at her strangely, and gave him a little smile.

"What is it, Richard? What are you thinking?"

"I was thinking," said he, "that you are so beautiful that I can hardly bear it. Does that sound like nonsense?—because it isn't."

"I don't care whether it's nonsense or not," she said. "I love it. If you didn't think I was—nice-looking, I should drown myself! And I shall, too, if you ever get

over thinking it. You told me that first evening at Catharine Dudley's dance that I was beautiful. I've never forgotten. I wondered if you'd ever say it again—and now you have.

"Oh," she cried, "I can't talk about my—my looks! Richard, what are they saying behind that door down yonder? What are they saying about you and me? I'm deathly afraid. I'm cold with fear." She pressed closer to him, held him by the shoulders, hid her face upon his coat.

"It means so much—so much!" she said. "Richard, do you know, after the other night in the garden, I thought—there couldn't be anything more. I thought we'd reached the highest height in all the world. I was quite contented to go on living with just the memory of that. I had no hope—not the smallest hope of anything else. I was really happy. But now——" She tightened her hold upon him with a sudden strength.

"I can't lose you!" she cried. "I think I should die. He's got to set me free, Richard! I couldn't bear it. It would be——"

Her head went up swiftly, and for a single tense instant the two stared into each other's eyes.

"What was that?" she said in a whisper. "I thought I heard—something. What was that sound?"

Richard Blake's head turned slowly until he faced the hall beneath.

"It might have been a book dropped on the floor," he said, but his face was white. He began to take the girl's hands down from his shoulders—free himself from her hold.

"Perhaps I'd better go and see." Once more their eyes met, and Vittoria gave a low cry.

"Ah, go! go quickly!" she said. "It's the door at the end of the corridor. Please be quick!"

He ran down the steps without further speech, and the girl stood looking after him, her hands caught up over her mouth lest she break into a scream, the beams of sunlight slanting across her head and shoulders—billets and lozenges of *azure* and *gules* and *or*.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### THE IRRESISTIBLE FORCE MEETS WITH THE IMMOVABLE OBJECT.

PENDER FLEMING sat in his dim room, where the sun never entered, and waited and waited for his great hour to come.

After so many years !

Perhaps he was quite mad at last. Perhaps he had been mad all that long time. Who shall say of a man that has dwelt for nearly twenty years in an air poisoned by hatred, malice, bitterness, despair—breathing that air into his lungs until all his blood is foul with it, until body and heart and soul reek with its poison—who shall say of such a man just where sanity ends and mania begins ?

Perhaps it is kinder to believe that he was mad.

He never went to bed at all on the night after he had received Creighton Blake's note. He sat all night alone in his study. He ate no dinner, he read none of his heavy books. He sat and stared before him, or hid his face, shivering, or broke into a long fit of that dreadful tittering laughter. But once, towards midnight, he unlocked and opened a certain drawer of the great table-desk, and took from it an object which he held for a long time in his hands, gloating over it, and at last hid away among the littered papers before him.

Once or twice during the night his valet knocked at the door, a triple knock, so that his master should know who it was, and once he heard Pender stirring about within, but there was no answer, and so the man went away. He was not greatly disturbed, for he had been in that house nearly ten years, and no eccentricity of the master of Standish could have surprised him very much.

He came again in the morning, and finally, between nine and ten, was admitted and received orders for breakfast, which, by the way, he removed almost untasted. It has been said that the servant was in a measure surprise-proof, yet even he went away with round and frightened eyes. Something during that long night had ravaged Pender Fleming's physical being incredibly. He had become a sort of dreadful caricature of himself—the pallid face deep scored with haggard lines, the pendulous lip outhanging grotesquely. All the man's great burden of unwholesome flesh seemed to hang loose upon his bones, like an ill-fitting garment. He was somehow horrible to see.

Again at noon he ate nothing, but drank a stiff glass of brandy and water. He waited and waited for that great hour, and, from time to time, laid his hand upon the object hidden under the papers, as if to make sure it was still there, ready for use. But by this time the mental strain under

which he was labouring, together with the lack of sleep and of food, had begun to tell upon him badly. His head was light and very feverish, with a singing in the ears—the brandy and water, after long abstinence from food, may have had something to do with that—and his eyes were playing grotesque tricks with him : he seemed to see through an orifice in a cloud of darkness. When he directed his gaze upon an object across the room, he saw that object well enough, but his field of vision was a space no more than a yard square ; everything beyond that, above it, or below it, or to either side, was first cloudy grey, confused in outline, then quite black. Also, if he looked steadily upon anything for more than a few seconds, it began to stir as if it were alive ; sometimes it jumped up and down, sometimes turned gravely, heels overhead, sometimes performed a grotesque but interesting dance.

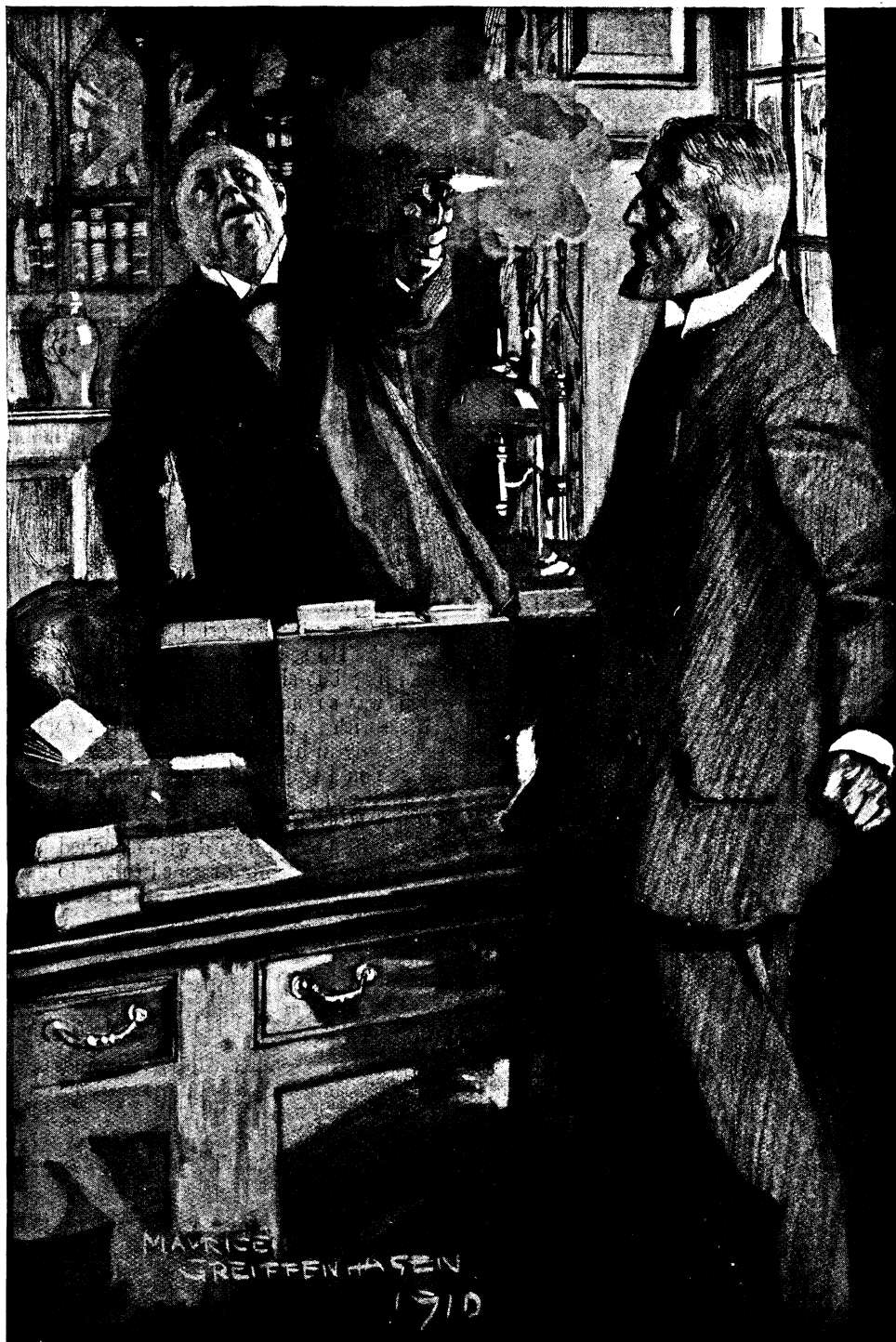
At first he was a little concerned about this—afraid that it might baulk him in what he had to do—but the fear did not endure long. He was beyond trifles. His extraordinary state of mind and body—which was not altogether unlike a state of drunkenness—swept them grandly aside. His mind could hold but one thing just then—the splendour of that coming hour—that crowning deed !

After so many years !

At half-past two the telephone at his elbow rang three short calls, and he took down the receiver. It was the ancient Griggs, announcing Mr. Temple and Mounceer dee Koosy. Pender had forgotten them both—forgotten that they were asked to call on this day. The interruption set him to storming in a childish and absurd rage. He cursed the astonished butler wickedly, then, for a moment, calmed himself and told the lie about being asleep. But even after that was done, the servant gone with his message, Pender trembled and swore, sitting alone in his shadows—called Beau Temple and the Frenchman outrageous names, tramped up and down the room excitedly, was on the point of having the two gentlemen turned out of the house.

Indeed, into such a jangle of overstrained nerves had this trivial interruption thrown him, that when, half an hour later, the telephone bell rang again, the man dropped forward against the edge of the big table with a cry that was almost a scream.

Griggs' voice said that Mr. Blake and Mr. Richard Blake had arrived, and Pender



"He raised the revolver quickly and fired."

began to shiver very violently from head to foot, so that the receiver thumped against his ear, and his teeth chattered. He made a tremendous effort and controlled his voice.

"Show Mr.—Blake in. Tell Mr. Richard Blake to wait five minutes. In five minutes I will ring. Then—I want him."

His heart was beating in slow, enormous throbs like a railway locomotive going up hill. He thought he heard the sound of them—so like the sound of the coughing, gasping engine—and he felt, with each throb, a great surge of blood up into his head, which almost burst under the impact. The door opened, a name was murmured, and Creighton Blake entered the room. The door closed again behind him. He came a step forward, peering a little, for the window blinds were drawn and the place in a half darkness.

With a scuffling sound, Pender Fleming got to his feet behind the broad mahogany table, and stood there, bent forward, his hands upholding him. His face was ghastly, and he was shaking all over like a man in a fit. Creighton Blake saw him and came forward another step or two, saying—

"I am here."

"At last!" said Pender Fleming, with a sort of sob. "At last—after all these years in hell!" His tongue began to stammer thickly.

"A r-reckoning at last!" said he. "Now y-you p-p-pay. First y-you, then your s-s-son — both Blakes together! Both Bl-lakes together! Both Bl-lakes g-g-gone where I-I've been for t-t-twenty years. Then I can die in peace."

His wavering, groping fingers found the thing which had been hidden under the papers and raised it a little way. He waited, one hand over his eyes, because the other man had suddenly begun to perform the most surprising feats. He had begun to jump from side to side with incredible agility, though neither his arms nor his legs seemed to stir. And wherever he jumped he left a sort of image of himself—a ghost, an eidolon, until there were, almost at once, a dozen Creighton Blakes in the room—tall, gaunt gentlemen with white hair and moustache, furrowed face, grave and courtly manner.

The visitor said—

"I have not come to offer you a reckoning. I offered that many years ago, and you refused it, though it is still yours, if you wish. I have come to make a plea for my son."

Pender Fleming gave a shout. He thought he knew now which of those crowded images was real. He raised the revolver quickly and fired. It was a small weapon of '32 calibre, but it made an appalling noise in that closed room—outside, through the thick panels, it seemed to have sounded like a book dropped on the floor—and the place was instantly full of acrid, biting smoke.

Creighton Blake sprang forward with a cry, and, as he came near, large and distinct and unmistakable now, the other man pulled the trigger of his pistol again; but the cartridge failed to explode, and, in an instant, the weapon was struck from his hand, and fell some distance away upon the floor. It was a brief, inglorious, pitifully unequal struggle. Pender Fleming had the sensation of being hurled violently from a great way off, backward, until he fell half fainting into the chair where he had sat, his head hanging over the chair's back, his legs and arms asprawl.

Blake stood above him white faced, with fierce eyes.

"*Murder!*" he cried. "*You'd murder me?*" He seemed to feel, for the moment, nothing but sheer astonishment and anger. He was so angry that he was trembling a little with it, and two spots of red came out suddenly in his pale cheeks.

"You'd trap me in here and murder me, would you? First me and then Richard. Good Heavens! Are you as vile as that?" He made a step forward with clenched hands, and Pender Fleming seemed to try to flatten his gross, sprawling body still farther back in the arm-chair. The whites of his eyes showed, all round, and his lips curled hideously back from his teeth in a violent grinning snarl of hate and fear. He looked like a cornered animal whose strength is gone so that it can fight no longer, only grin and snarl and wait for death.

The white-haired man gazed down upon him as upon something loathsome.

"What a vile and a contemptible coward!" said he. "What an abominable monster!" He thought he heard a sound behind him, and turned swiftly to see, but there was no one. What he had heard was the door of the room opening a few inches and closing again, for Richard Blake to look in. He went a step towards the other side of the room, peering through the shadows, but all was still there again, and so he turned back. He picked up the fallen pistol and slipped it into his pocket, then moved once more

close to the big table and gazed down upon the man who sat behind it.

"A coward!" he said reflectively. "Yes, you have been a coward from the very first—from the beginning. It is only cowards who are brutal enough and malicious enough to inflict upon a woman such cruelties as—she suffered from you—you beast! You filthy beast! It's only cowards who do what you did. They do it because they are weak and contemptible. Brutality is their only strength."

"And then," said Creighton Blake—"then, when she could bear no more, when I had her taken away from you, and was trying to give her a little poor happiness, did you follow, as a man would have done—face me—make me answer for robbing you? Not you! Not you! You hid yourself here in your house and feared and hated and cursed. You were afraid! And after that—when she—had died, and I returned and wrote to you to say that I was ready now to answer for what I had done—ready to give you such satisfaction as a man may offer—the risk of his life, before you—what then? You were afraid! You never even answered my letter. I wrote again, and still you hid yourself, and hated, and hated, and were afraid."

"Your child grew up to be a girl and a young woman. Did you play a father's part to that motherless girl—take her out into the world—try to make her life a happy life? Not you, again! You hid yourself still. You were afraid the world would remember. You had a coward's miserable pride. You remained here, crouching in the dark like a horrible, gigantic spider, and secreted hatred and malice and fear—always fear."

"So we come to the end. Your daughter and my son love each other. Ah! there was a bitter blow to you, eh, my poisonous friend! You lie to the child, extort a promise from her, and then, to make more certain, you'd murder me and my son. What hells are there, Fleming, black enough, foul enough, for such as you? I wonder." He made a restless, nervous movement, as if his anger were hard to endure with calmness.

"I came here to make a plea," he said. "I came here to beg you to forget what has been, and to let these young people, who have been innocent of harm towards you, have their happiness. A plea!" The man's voice rose contemptuously.

"A plea to such as you! I could laugh at myself for a fool!"

With an abrupt movement he pushed

several loose sheets of paper across towards the silent man, who lay back in his chair and seemed scarcely to breathe—looked like one dead in utter terror.

"Write!" said Creighton Blake, in his sharp, contemptuous tone. "Write, giving your daughter back her promise! There's ink before you, and paper. Be quick!"

Pender Fleming drew a hoarse breath and his lips twisted, drew back once more into that silent, grinning snarl, which made him look so like a cornered animal. But he did not move.

"Then I'll make you," said the other man briefly, and drew the revolver from his coat pocket. At the sight of it Pender Fleming uttered a thin cry. Blake opened the weapon and spun the cylinder under his thumb. There was one spent cartridge and one which had failed to explode. The other three were untouched. He snapped the breech to, and folded his arms, holding the revolver in his right hand.

"You will write," said he in a brisk tone, with no anger in it, no threat. "You will write, or this is the end of you. You have done nothing but ill in your life, Pender. You have harmed all who have come near you all your life long. You are like a poisonous reptile, and poisonous reptiles should be destroyed without hesitation. Once before I have rescued a victim of yours, and, thank Heaven! she lived to know a little brief happiness after she had come out from under your shadow. Now I am going to rescue another. Oh, yes, I know the promise was to extend beyond your life—to the length of the girl's own. But she is young, my friend. And she is very much in love. Words aren't worth much when love comes. With you gone she'll find a way. Write what I tell you, or this is the end of all things for you! And I shall not regret ridding the earth of such a thing. I shall be proud of it. My own life is spent. I shall follow you, conscious of having done a good act."

He took out his watch, looked at it, and laid it upon the table before him. He said—

"I'll give you two minutes," and folded his arms once more.

One wonders how far the man was sincere—how far he would have gone towards carrying out his threat.

But Pender Fleming lay back in his arm-chair incapable of movement. He was cold, physically cold, to the very marrow, and shivered with it, and he was afraid with a



fear more bitter, more chill, more paralysing, than he had thought could exist in the world of men.

By what sorcery had Creighton Blake penetrated to the nethermost depths of his soul and recognised what lay crouching there? For Blake had spoken the truth. He was a coward. He had always been a coward, and he had always known it, though, like many another before him, he had covered it with a cloak of sternness, of repellent silence, of tyranny, of brutal harshness. All his life he had been in secret afraid of little things and big. As a boy he had been afraid of the other boys—afraid of horses, of high places, of the water, of traffic in the streets. And he had tried to hide it with bluster and the affectation of love of solitude. As a man he had been afraid of innumerable things, and had lied and pretended and dissembled to conceal it. He had been secretly afraid of his wife until he found that she was afraid of him. Then he had ill-treated her incredibly. When she had fled, he had been afraid of the world's laughter, scorn, the pointing finger, and so had hidden himself behind a mask of solitude and of grief that was, to do him justice, by no means unreal.

But most of all things or beings in this world he had been afraid of Creighton Blake, and so had hated him most; and now the man knew it and had come to mock him. Creighton Blake, strong, fearless, a terrible figure, stood over him, searching his craven soul, and saw it as if the daylight struck in there, and knew that he was master.

From all the others he had hidden what shivered there within him—from Bianca, from Bianca's daughter, from Beaumont Temple. The mask had been a good mask—had served him well. But Creighton Blake saw beneath it as if it were not there—saw and knew and was scornful. Only cowards who have well hidden their cowardice under a mask of pride can realise the intolerable bitterness of the man's abasement now that his garments were stripped from him and he lay naked. He writhed with it as with a physical agony. It seared him like a devouring flame. It was shame more poignantly terrible than any words can give even a dim image of. And Creighton Blake stood by and watched!

What was that question Vittoria had put to herself? "When an irresistible force meets with an immovable object, what will the result be?" The old catch question. Vittoria had wondered, but her father knew

now. He knew where the flaw was in that question. For there exists no immovable object in this universe. Creighton Blake's will, and his fear of it, were the irresistible force. He himself had passed for the immovable object, but he was not—he was a lie, a cheat, a sham. He was afraid to the bottom of his soul.

He looked with despairing eyes at that still man before him. The eyes fell upon the little, bright, deadly thing in the man's hand, and he gave a violent shiver.

"Death!" He looked into the face of death, and his mouth was dry and his bones turned to water. Fear ran icy fingers up and down his back. What though life meant suffering and loneliness and shame and dishonour, he clung to it with desperate hands. He could not die. He was afraid to.

"One minute and a half," said Creighton Blake. "You have thirty seconds left of this life of yours." He unfolded his arms.

Like a manikin pulled by wires, Pender Fleming's body jerked forward suddenly over the broad table. His face lay among the papers, his hands clawed these feebly. He thought he screamed, but his lips made only whispering noises.

"I will do it!" he cried in those desperate whispers. "I will do it! For Heaven's sake, don't—kill me! Let me live! I will do it!" He pushed himself up to a sitting posture. His hands scrambled among the things before him.

Creighton Blake inked a pen and held it out. He said—

"Write what I tell you!" And the other whispered—

"Yes! Yes!"

"Write, 'I was wrong.'"

With an incredible effort, Pender Fleming wrote the words.

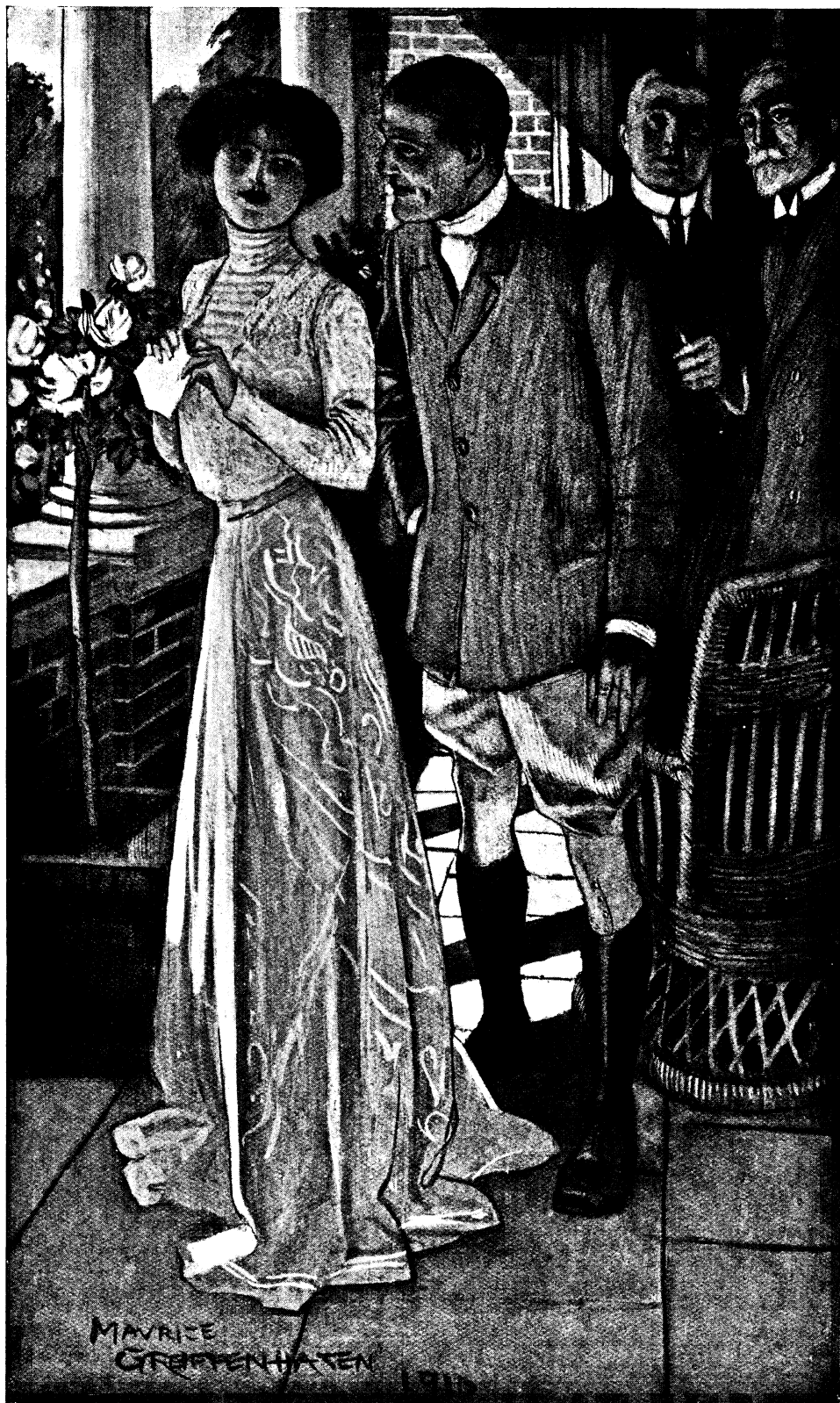
"I release my daughter from her promise to me. I give my free consent to her marriage with Richard Blake. I wish her happiness."

The pen traced the words very slowly with infinite labour. It was like a child writing. The man's head hung forward almost upon the table before him, his mouth open and awry.

"Sign it!"

The signature was scrawled at the bottom, still with slow pains, and the pen rolled away from the slackened hand.

Creighton Blake drew a deep breath. He took the paper, blotted it carefully, and put it in his pocket. He made as if to lay the pistol down, but glanced at the man bowed



“‘There’s such a lot of people here!’ she said.”

before him, and slipped that into his pocket also. Then he turned to go, but half-way across the room came back.

"I shall put the proper sort of face upon this," said he. "Your daughter shall never know her release did not come from you willingly. But, as a safeguard, I shall tell my son the truth—no one else. If I know you, and I think I do, Pender—I think I know you well—you will be silent also—for your pride's sake. You'll never let it be known that you gave way because you were afraid. So far as I am concerned, you can go on safely, hiding yourself, playing out your farce to the end of your life. I won't give you away."

He looked once more upon that bowed, silent figure, and then turned and left the room, closing the door after him.

So Pender Fleming was left alone in his darkened room, seated there where he had sat so many years. He had paid the price in shame and in mean humiliation, but he was alive. Stripped of honour and of pride, naked in his abasement, still he lived, and probably would go on living for years to come, for he was not a very old man. He looked starkly into those future years, and they were cold and grey and lonely. He knew that, after the first writhings of anguish were over, he would gather together a few miserable shreds of what had been pride, and, huddling them about him, would go on, more or less as he had always gone—aping, pretending, hiding what must be hidden, until the last day of all. It was a dreary prospect, and he took small pleasure in it, but he was alive. He hugged that thought to him, warmed it in his bosom. All else was gone from him, but he was still alive.

It is perhaps the measure of his measureless fall that he fell to gloating over that.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### ALL'S WELL AT LAST.

WHEN Creighton Blake went out from Pender Fleming's study and closed the door, he found his son waiting for him near the stair-landing in the hall. The younger man was a little pale and his face had its hard, grim look. He met his father with a low-voiced exclamation, and looked at him anxiously.

"You're not hurt, then?" he demanded. And Creighton Blake said—

"No. You heard that shot?"

"Vittoria and I both heard it—heard a noise, at least. We were here, waiting. I

went to the door and opened it a few inches and looked in. The place was full of powder-smoke, so I knew at once what had happened, but I saw you standing up and talking to Fleming, so I knew there'd been no great harm done. I told Vittoria that it must have been a heavy book dropped on the floor. It sounded rather like that."

"Where is she—Vittoria?" asked the elder man; and his son said—

"Out on the porch with the others." He drew a sigh which seemed to express deep dejection and some bitterness.

"So the man was shamming, after all! And it's to do all over again. I wish he'd shot at me. I should have killed him, I think."

"You wouldn't have had to," said Creighton Blake. "I didn't. The man's a coward. I only threatened him. What a miserable coward! It was rather horrible to see. Well, I got it, anyhow."

Richard Blake began to tremble. He caught his father's arm, staring into the elder man's face.

"What d'you mean? Got what? You don't mean to say——"

"Oh, yes, I do!" said Creighton Blake, laughing excitedly. "That's just what I do mean to say. I blackguarded him for a bit and threatened him, and he gave in."

The younger man leant against the stair railing and covered his face with his hands. But his father clapped him upon the back, crying—

"Come, come, lad! Buck up! It's all right. We've won. Come out and tell the girl. Don't stand there like a graven image!" He slipped an arm about his son's shoulders and drew him along towards the door of that room which gave upon the side verandah.

"I got it in writing," said he. "I was taking no risks. I got it down in black and white *with* signature, and Fleming won't go back on it, for his miserable pride's sake." He slipped his free hand into a pocket and withdrew the folded paper. He gave it to Richard Blake.

"Take it out and give it to her for a betrothal present. It will be welcome, I think." But when the younger man had read the few words, he thrust it back again into his father's hand.

"Give it to her yourself!" said he. "You got it—Heaven knows how!—it's yours to give. She'll like to have it come from you." He drew a great breath of relief and relaxation and joy.

"I've had a bad quarter of an hour," he confessed, "since I looked in through that door."

They went through the drawing-room, and at the open French windows which gave upon the porch the younger man fell behind, so that his father might be first. Creighton Blake emerged holding the paper in his hand. He said—

"Where's my future daughter-in-law?" And Vittoria ran to him with a cry. The man held up his paper before her eyes, saying—

"Read that, young woman! Read it!" She read it and gave a small shriek of delight, clapping her hands together like a child. Behind her Beau Temple said—

"By Jove, he's done it! Hurrah for old Pender. I didn't know he had it in him. Good old Pender!" Vittoria turned and threw her arms about his neck. For the second time that day the man got more than his strict rights. He beamed down upon the head that was burrowing into his coat, and the others, standing about them, laughed.

"Here! here!" Beau Temple said. "Stop that! Do you want to get me knifed in the back some dark night? Your young man has a red gleam in his eye already. Get away from me. My life's in danger!" The girl patted his cheeks with her two hands, called him a darling—whereat Beau Temple said "Pooh! pooh!"—and stood away from him.

"I must go to my father," she cried. "He's all alone in there. I want to thank him for being a dear." She turned towards the open window, but Creighton Blake was before her.

"I—ah, I wouldn't go in just now, I think," said he. "Perhaps a bit later. I think your father would rather be alone for a while. You see—he's a little upset—a little nervous. We've been talking about things——"

She said "Oh!" soberly, and looked for a moment into the man's eyes. It struck her all at once that Creighton Blake's manner and bearing had altered greatly in that short time within the house. He had gone in bowed, grief-ridden, hesitant, had emerged with erect head and flushed cheeks, with a warlike gleam under his grey brows. She said "Oh!" again, and it may be that she understood a little—knew that something had occurred behind that closed door which it would be best to know no more of. So she turned away, and found her lover beside her, silent, with glowing eyes. *A propos* of

nothing in particular, she began to blush all over, and was aware that her heart beat very fast. She looked over her shoulder with a little quick laugh.

"There's such a lot of people here!" she said. "Come down into my garden with me!"

Beaumont Temple watched the two go down across the lawn until they were out of sight, and he nodded his head.

"All's well at last!" said he. "God's in His heaven," and turned his eyes to Creighton Blake.

"Pender has surprised me. I was a little afraid. I distrusted him. I must shake his hand for this."

The other man looked a bit uncomfortable. He said—

"Perhaps—of course, I can't say much, but perhaps I ought to tell you that—well, he wasn't quite prepared to do it, you know—not quite prepared. It took some urging." And at that Beau Temple nodded, for he had found out what he wanted to know. He, as well as Vittoria, had noted that erect head and martial bearing—had had his suspicions.

"Well, it's done, anyhow," said he. And Creighton Blake said—

"Yes, it's done." The eyes of the two men met and held.

"So there remains," said Temple, "only to get the youngsters married—and as soon as possible. Prod your son into insisting upon an immediate marriage. I dare say he won't need prodding, though. Vittoria will hold up her hands in horror, of course—protest—argue. Secretly she'll be delighted, for she's very dull here. And Pender——"

"Ah!" said the other man softly, and the eyes of the two still held with a certain significance.

"You're wise," Creighton Blake said—"very wise. I'm altogether with you. We must speak for an early marriage—insist upon it. One never knows——"

"And, meanwhile," said the younger man—"meanwhile, perhaps Vittoria might spend a few days with Mrs. Faring—a woman's essential at these times. Doubtless the two of them will be going up to town for clothes—all the mysterious things brides have to be provided with. Then a quiet wedding, eh?"

Creighton Blake nodded his head without relaxing his alert gaze. He had the air to be following something obscure in the other man's mind—something beneath the spoken words. He said—

"I'll speak to Mrs. Faring. It shall be done, you may be sure. Perhaps we could even take my future daughter-in-law back to Cedar Hill in the motor-car with us, and keep her there."

"That would be a very good plan indeed," said Beaumont Temple gravely. "Pender will understand, I am sure, that the child wants a woman's aid and counsel just now—if it's put to him with care." And, for just an instant, Mr. Blake's face wore a little grim smile, while he said—

"I'll put it. Trust me! And I'll keep her under my eye."

A gardener's boy was passing the verandah, and Temple asked him to send his trap around.

"I must be off," he said. "Perhaps we'll drive over to Cedar Hill this evening, De Coucy and I, for a general jollification. Tell Mrs. Faring to expect us." The two men shook hands very heartily, with mutual respect and liking. They had not said very much, but they understood each other perfectly, and they had managed to construct between them, in a singularly brief time, a very workmanlike conspiracy for the care and safety of Vittoria Fleming. So Temple turned away, found Raoul de Coucy

at the other end of the porch, where he had withdrawn, and with an arm flung across the blind man's shoulders, went down the steps and round the house towards the drive, where his trap was waiting.

Half-way he halted for a moment, and De Coucy asked: "Why do we stop?"

"I see two young people down in the gardens beside the goldfish pool," Beau Temple said. "They look very happy. They don't know they are being watched, but they wouldn't care if they did know it. One of them has her head on the other's shoulder. Ah! now they're walking on, down under the arbour. They're going to the walled garden. Nobody can see them there."

The Frenchman drew a little sigh.

"Ah, *si jeunesse savait!*"

"If it knew what?" demanded Beaumont Temple.

"What it costs," said Raoul de Coucy. "If youth knew what it costs! I was thinking of how much pain there has gone into the making of that happiness down yonder."

A brave and gallant gentleman squared his shoulders and reared his head.

"It's worth it," said he.

THE END.

## THE LORD OF THE HOUSE.

**I**N the crocus-gold of the sunrise flame

Ajar stood the House-door, lonely, lonely;

—*Ni jamais, ni toujours, n'est la devise de l'Amour*—

The Lord of the House to the threshold came,

Within a heart waited, for him, him only,

For him who comes *ni jamais, ni toujours*.

The spider-web broke where it stretched dew-spun;

He entered in to the heart that waited,

—*Ni jamais, ni toujours, n'est la devise de l'Amour*—

Followed his feet the springtime and sun,

Heart with heart at his coming was mated,

Heart with heart—*ni jamais, ni toujours*.

In the amethyst dusk he went his way.

On the threshold upsprings the bindweed and briar;

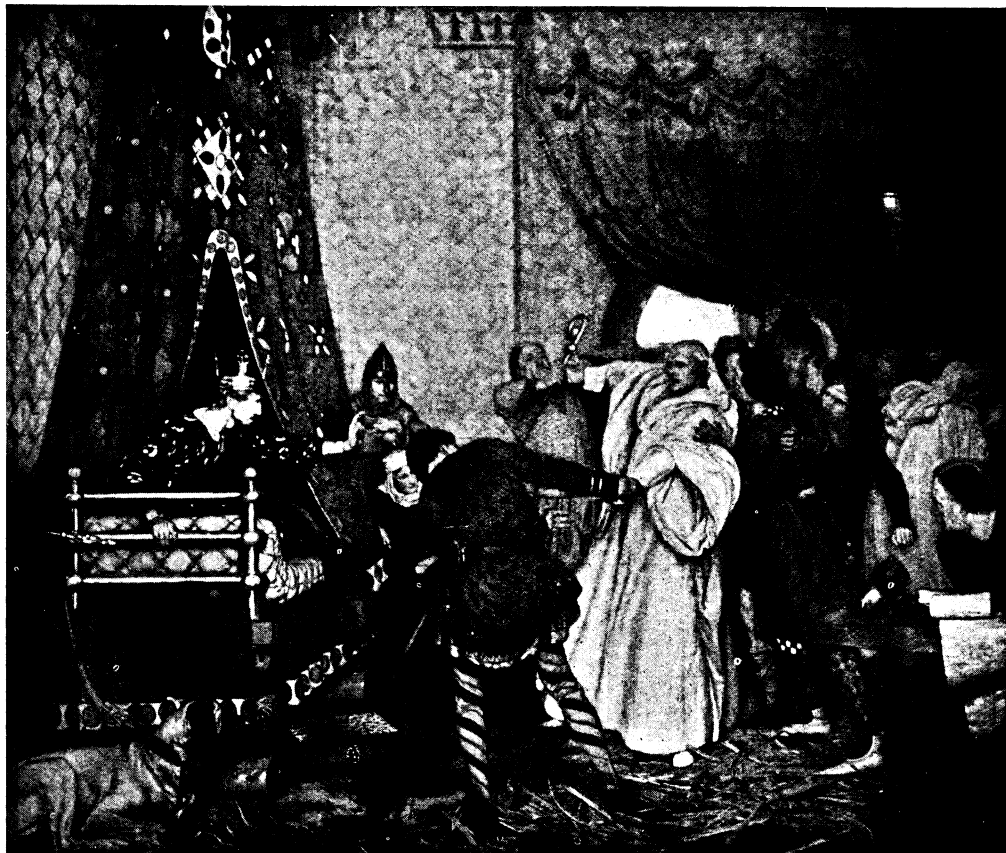
—*Ni jamais, ni toujours, n'est la devise de l'Amour*—

Spiders, reweave your net-woof grey,

A heart grieves within for her Heart's-desire,

For him who comes *ni jamais, ni toujours*.

UNA ARTEVELDE TAYLOR.



"ANSELM PROTESTINGLY ACCEPTING THE PRIMACY AT THE BEDSIDE OF WILLIAM RUFUS, 1093."

BY W. G. SIMMONDS.

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## ENGLAND'S STORY IN PORTRAIT AND PICTURE.

### VI. THE REIGNS OF WILLIAM II., HENRY I., AND STEPHEN.

**I**N our previous article we touched but lightly on the last years of William's reign, as disturbed by the revolts of his barons and his sons, because we knew that we must traverse the ground again in considering the reigns of William II. and Henry I., in order to include in our series the comparatively few and largely unimportant pictures inspired by the period immediately following the Norman Conquest.

William's children at the time of his accession were Robert, the eldest, named after the Conqueror's well-remembered father, William Rufus, and six daughters. His youngest son, Henry, afterwards Henry I., was born two years later, 1068, in England.

When William left Normandy to subdue this country, he made his twelve-year-old boy Robert regent of his duchy, and although presumably the child, with his brothers and sisters, came over to England with their mother at the end of 1067, or the beginning of 1068, his character developed into one of discontented ambition as his education progressed. Orderic, the historian, distinctly states that he held a grudge against his father for not allowing him to continue that rule which he had come to consider as his right, by the conference upon him of regency and the homage which, as regent, he had received; and, since the position of Normandy after the conquest of England suffered con-



siderably from the absence of its ruler—Maine revolted and Le Mans declared itself a commonwealth in 1073—there is some excuse for Robert's protest against his father's decision to retain within his grasp the reins of a government his hands were too occupied to control. In 1077, at the age of twenty-three, Robert, as we saw in our previous article, was in open rebellion, secretly backed up with counsel and money by his mother. There was an apparent reconciliation between father and son, but Robert, never really forgiven, spent the years that intervened between this episode and his father's death a wanderer over Europe; and although in 1080 he took part in an expedition against the Scots, his imperious temper and his arrogance kept the two men, too much alike in character, in active animosity.

William's death, as we know, occurred in 1087, during the war he was making with Philip, king of France; and his disposal of his dominions on his death-bed, carried on, as Professor Freeman says, "his political history almost to his last breath." Surrounded by his barons, he apportioned his possessions, pardoned his enemies, not only those of English birth, but the malcontent Normans and Bretons, and his brother Odo, who had headed them.

To Robert, the only one of his three sons then absent, he left Normandy and its dependencies; to William Rufus, or "the Red," he left England, giving him advice to return there at once, the bearer of a letter containing his wishes to the primate, Lanfranc. To his third son, Henry, he left what sounds to-day the modest portion of five thousand pounds, accompanying it with the prophecy: "Be patient and thou shalt inherit the fortunes of both thy brothers." Such is the tale, made up, very likely, after the prophecy had been fulfilled.

Leaving their father to die alone, the two younger sons hurried off, eager for their heritage.

The claim of William Rufus to the English

throne was made on nothing stronger than his father's death-bed wishes, and English history had as yet never raised a younger son into supremacy over an elder. It might, however, in the case of the Conqueror, be assumed that he was exempt from ordinary precedent, since acquisition and not heredity had made him monarch of England. Anyhow, since Archbishop Lanfranc, who dominated the council of prelates, supported the claim, Rufus was declared king and crowned at Winchester within three weeks of his father's death. According to Eadmer, a Benedictine monk of Canterbury, a contemporary chronicler, he took the oath to govern according to justice, to observe equity and mercy, to maintain the peace,

liberties, and privileges of the Church, and—here we probably are shown the reason of Lanfranc's support—to follow the archbishop's counsel in his administration.

Once secure upon the throne, Rufus held himself absolved from all his oaths, and immediately began that rule of oppression which marks the thirteen years of his reign as a period of one of the worst tyrannies in our history.

Immediately on the accession of Rufus,

Odo of Bayeux placed himself in opposition to the new monarch, chiefly, it is assumed, out of enmity to Lanfranc, who was his personal enemy. Odo promptly intrigued on behalf of Robert, and had very little difficulty in inducing others to enrol themselves and their followers under his banner of rebellion. Robert of Normandy, however, although he had much of the overbearing character of his younger brother, their inheritance from their father, had none of that father's promptness. He was procrastinating and indolent. He delayed to take advantage of the uprising in his favour, and the favourable moment passed unseized. The English, always desirous of retaliating upon the foreigner, won by many specious promises of aggrandisement, rallied round the standard of their king. There was a certain amount of bloodshed,



WILLIAM II., SURNAMED "RUFUS."

*From an engraving by G. Vertue.*



"WILLIAM II. TAKING THE RING AT HIS CORONATION, 1087." BY R. CATON WOODVILLE.

flight on the part of several of the principal insurgents, whose estates benefited the royalists, and a granting of pardons, with banishment only for the king's uncle, the Bishop Odo, and so the rebellion ended.

Odo took refuge in Normandy, at this period a wide area of anarchy and violence, for Robert ruled his dukedom with a levity and indecision which placed him at the mercy of his turbulent barons. So im-

provident was he, in his ill-administered sovereignty, that, to raise money for his immediate pleasurable necessities, he sold a third part of his duchy, the province of Contentin, to his brother Henry for three thousand pounds. In retaliation for the cheap bargain which Henry thus secured, Robert afterwards put Henry in prison, and

were expelled, Henry, now released from captivity, fighting valiantly on his own and Robert's behalf.

The rebellion of the Normans in England, headed by Odo of Bayeux, took place in 1088, the year after the accession of William Rufus; the unsuccessful invasion of Normandy marks the year 1089, and in this year the

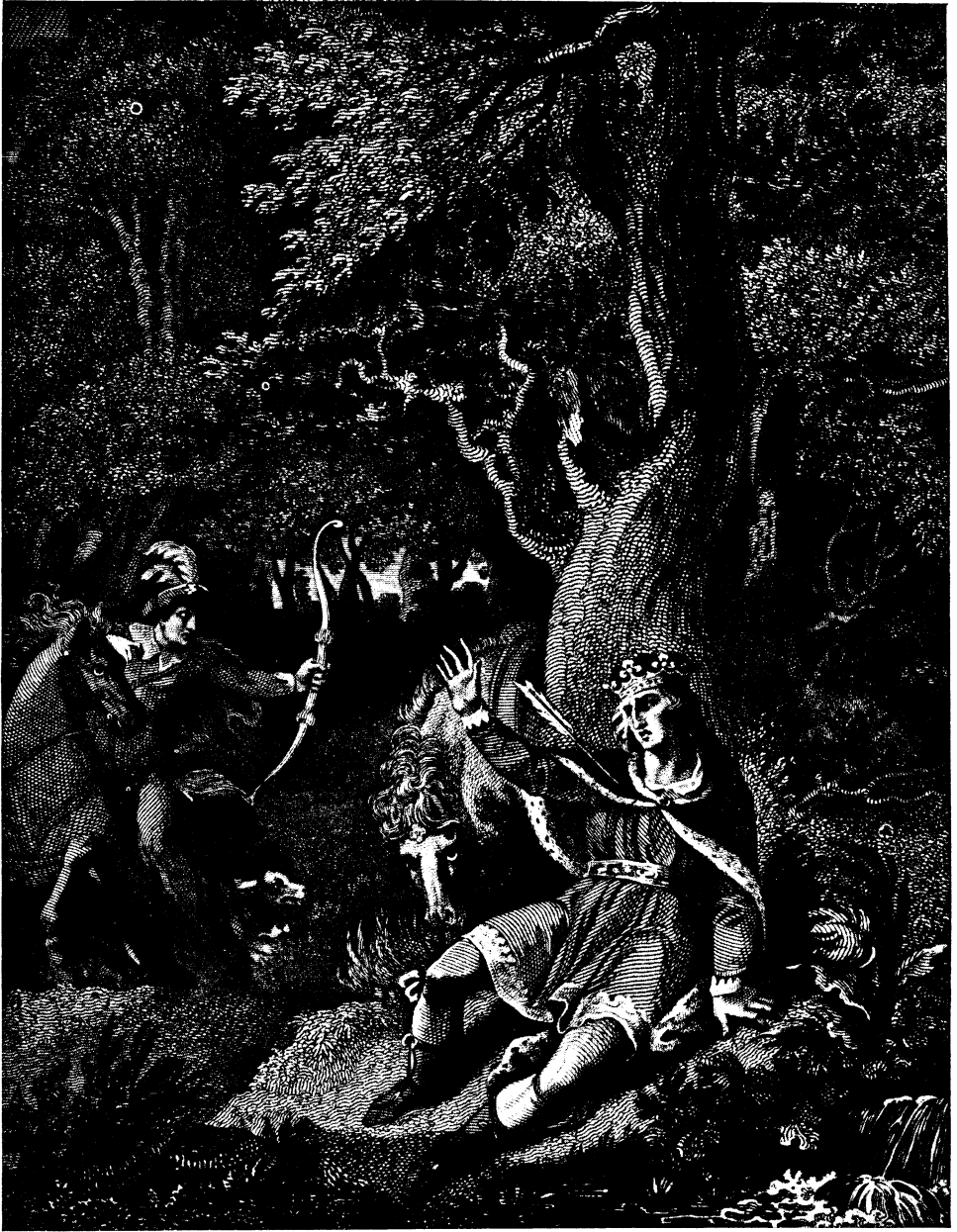


"THE DEATH OF WILLIAM RUFUS, 1100."

*From an old engraving.*

then had to call upon the King of France to protect him from an invasion by William, who, taking advantage of the cupidity of Robert's Norman vassals, had, by a judicious dispensation of presents, secured every fortress on the right bank of the Seine. France had her price also, and William paid it. Even so, however, the successful issue of the fight was on the Norman side, and the English

restraining and placating influence of Archbishop Lanfranc was removed from William by death. In 1090, therefore, we see the English monarch crossing to Normandy with a numerous army, and the three brothers again engaged in strife, Robert appealing once more to France to act as intermediary, and the Norman barons throwing their weight in the scale for peace. We can then



"THE DEATH OF WILLIAM RUFUS, 1100." BY C. M. METZ.

discern the policy of William in strong relief against the credulity of Robert, and the somewhat equivocal merit of Henry, for whose skill in statesmanship we might have more sympathy, did we not remember how cruelty and dissimulation marked his conduct when, in due time, some ten years later, he ascended the English throne.

The treaty then entered into by the

brothers, William and Robert, stipulated for the succession of each to the dominions of the other on the decease of either; the indemnification of Robert by property in England for his losses in Normandy, and the deposition of Henry from his Normandy estate.

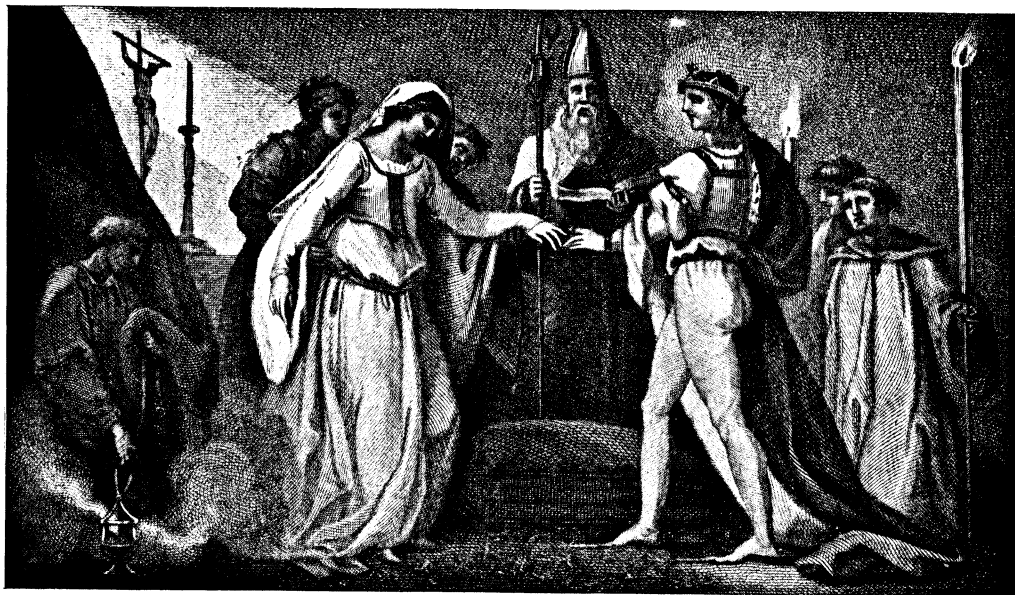
The last clause resulted in the siege of Mont St. Michel, where, after seeking a somewhat unsafe asylum with their brother-

in-law, the King of Scotland, Henry sought one yet more unsafe, and one from which he was obliged to retreat.

Side by side with the regal runs the ecclesiastical and national history of England, although so coupled they often pulled away from one another. The Church, then the almoner of the people, laid its sacred hands upon as much real estate as in those times was fairly easy of acquisition, nominally holding such estate under the Crown. The Crown, always opposing such tenure, always attempting to get its own back again, had but one opportunity of so doing—namely, when a see became vacant and its revenues

protesting against the violence of his election, was forced to accept the crozier which was the emblem of archiepiscopal dignity. This scene occurred in 1093, and is a curious illustration of the saying: "When the devil was sick, the devil a saint would be."

Robert had accompanied William back to England in the hope of receiving the latter's promised indemnity; but we know that William evaded payment, and was declared a false and perjured knight by emissaries sent to court by the duke, who at the same time renounced his brother's friendship and returned to Normandy. William followed him, and the treaty, at the instance of twenty-



"THE MARRIAGE OF HENRY I. TO MATILDA OF SCOTLAND, 1100."

*From an old engraving.*

lapsed. The See of Canterbury became vacant by the death of Archbishop Lanfranc in 1089, and its revenues fell into the hands of Rufus. Four years later, Anselm, the Abbot of Bec, in Normandy, came to England on a visit to Hugh, Earl of Chester, a visit which synchronised with the serious illness of the king. Alarmed at what he thought might be the approach of death, Rufus determined to amend his ways and to restore to the Church the estate of which he had unjustly deprived it. He sent for the saintly Piedmontese, and, in the fervour of repentance, declared that he would bestow the primacy upon him. Anselm refused acquiescence in the royal gift. He was, however, dragged to the bedside of the king, and, although

four Norman barons, was held justifiable of enforcement. From this decision Rufus appealed to the sword, calling for large English reinforcements to his army, and mulcting the twenty thousand men who obeyed his summons of the ten shillings each received from his leader before embarkation for the campaign.

Placed by these nefarious means in possession of a large sum of money, Rufus caused the robbed men to be disbanded, and applied part of his ill-gotten gains to bribing the King of France to abstain from interfering in this brotherly quarrel, and, after some inglorious skirmishes, returned to his own dominions. The chivalrous spirit of Robert, and perhaps that habit of adventure which



HENRY I. AS A YOUNG MAN.

*From an engraving by G. Vertue.*

he had for many years pursued, now led him to play into William's hands. He surrendered his claims to the promised indemnity, and offered to give William control of his dominions for five years if he would supply him with the sum of ten thousand marks to enable him to go on a crusade to Jerusalem. Peter the Hermit had just returned thence, and the reigning Pope, Urban, was urging

the Western nations to lay aside their dissensions and unite in one general attempt to rescue the Holy Sepulchre from desecration.

William summoned a council of his barons and pleaded the emptiness of his exchequer. The barons, in their turn, argued with their people, and wrung from a down-trodden, over-taxed race the requisite sum. The deal was made, Robert immediately taking his place in the first crusade as one of the three commanders, the other two being Godfrey de Bouillon, Count of Boulogne and Duke of Lower Lorraine, and Raymond de St. Gilles, Count of Toulouse.

With the exception of Maine, which he lost and recovered more than once in war-



MATILDA OF SCOTLAND, FIRST QUEEN OF HENRY I.



HENRY I. IN OLD AGE.

fare with its Count, Helie de la Flèche, and did not finally subdue until 1099, William was received by the Normans without opposition, and was able to restore so good a semblance of order in the duchy, that in the year following his occupation, 1097, we find him back in England and making only occasional visits to his brother's dominions. The length of term of the mortgage of Normandy lacked one year to its expiration when death put an end to William's tenure. The king, in the company of his brother Henry, with whom he was once again on good terms, and many nobles of his court, was, in the beginning of the August of 1100, hunting in the New Forest, which was already





"THE DEATH OF PRINCE WILLIAM, SON OF HENRY I., 1120." BY I. F. RIGAUD.



KING STEPHEN.

*From an engraving by G. Vertue.*

held in ill-omen as the place where his half-brother, Richard, had perished. The account of the circumstances of William's death which obtained credit at the time was that, following a wounded deer with his gaze, he held his hand to intercept from his eyes the rays of the sun, and that at this moment an arrow from the bow of Walter Tyrrel, a French knight, glanced off a tree and struck him in the breast. As he was apparently alone with Tyrrel, this version is but hearsay, and the Abbot of St. Denis, Suger, then a youth of nineteen, subsequently avouched that he had heard Tyrrel affirm on oath that he had not been near the king that day. The question, therefore, whether Rufus fell by accident or design must remain an open one. If he perished by design—a supposition which Lingard says is not improbable—it was a cautious instinct that made the English fix the guilt upon a foreigner. It was not until sunset that night that the body of the monarch was found by a poor charcoal burner, who placed it in his cart and conveyed it to Winchester, where it was buried with almost indecent haste the next morning.

Short and fat, with fair hair and a ruddy complexion, Rufus was, according to a contemporary writer, debauched, rapacious, despotic, and arrogant. Assuming in public a haughty mien, he endeavoured to intimidate all who were outside the small circle of his

close friends by the tones of his voice, the fierceness of his gaze, and the harshness of his speech, which, slow and stammering in ordinary talk, became in the hurry of passion absolutely unintelligible. With the few, and in private, he condescended to equality, amusing them with coarse wit.

The royal treasury at Winchester, when Rufus succeeded, contained sixty thousand pounds of silver, besides gold and precious stones, but such was the new monarch's extravagance that no amount of wealth could equal the demand of his imbecile prodigality—imbecile because, apparently, his taste was regulated by price. William of Malmesbury tells how on one occasion he refused a pair of hose because he knew them to have cost only three shillings, and put on an inferior pair on being informed they were valued at a mark. He was the most luxurious and extravagant of his contemporaries, he lavished immense sums on his wardrobe and his table and on the paid services of foreigners, and when his inherited wealth showed signs of becoming exhausted, he set to work to replenish his treasury by pitiless exactions from his people.

Men of the meanest condition or guilty of any crime were listened to if they could



MATILDA OF BOULOGNE, QUEEN OF KING STEPHEN.

*From a contemporary statue in Furness Abbey.*

suggest anything likely to be advantageous to the king; the halter was loosened from the robber's neck if he could promise emolument to the sovereign.

We have but to turn to the text of *Magna Charta* and the repeal of the laws which the Conqueror and his immediate descendants had made, to see how heavily these monarchs must have pressed upon the people. For instance, what a state of things is implied by the clause: "No constable or bailiff of ours shall

take corn or other chattels of any man unless he give money for it. No freeman shall be imprisoned . . . save by the lawful judgment of his peers or by the law of the land . . . All evil custom concerning forests shall be inquired into." There is a pregnant sentence which says that many forests shall be deforested, which reminds us how these early Norman monarchs, for their "insatiate and superfluous pleasure," included fertile valleys and cultivated uplands in their preserves, and absorbed towns and villages into wildernesses, seizing and wasting corn and pasture land, that they might have space enough to hunt in.

Henry I., surnamed *Beauclerc*, or "the fine scholar," who was hunting with his brother's party on the day fatal to Rufus, no sooner heard of his brother's death than he hastened to Winchester to secure the royal treasure,

and there, three days after, he was crowned. To justify this usurpation from Robert, who had then reached Italy on his way home from Jerusalem, Henry published far and wide a charter of liberties. By this he undertook to restore to the Church its old immunities; to keep filled its benefices, the emoluments of which, when empty, went to the Crown; to grant to his immediate vassals right to dispose of their property without prohibitive fees; to put in force the laws of Edward the

Confessor, as amended by his father, and, in fact, to rule as justly as had done the most just of his Saxon predecessors. In this way, and by declaring his resolution to marry a princess of the line of Alfred, Henry secured the suffrages of the people. He was crowned on the 5th of August, and on the 11th of the following November he married Matilda, the daughter of Malcolm, King of Scots, whose mother, Margaret,

was the daughter of Edward the Outlaw, and thus the great-granddaughter of the Saxon king, Edmund Ironside.

Policy and pacification were the passwords of Henry to his people's favour, and admirably did they serve him. When, in 1101, Robert of Normandy, instigated by the counsels of Flambard, Bishop of Durham, a prelate obnoxious to the people, who had escaped to Normandy from the confinement to which Henry, as a popular concession, had

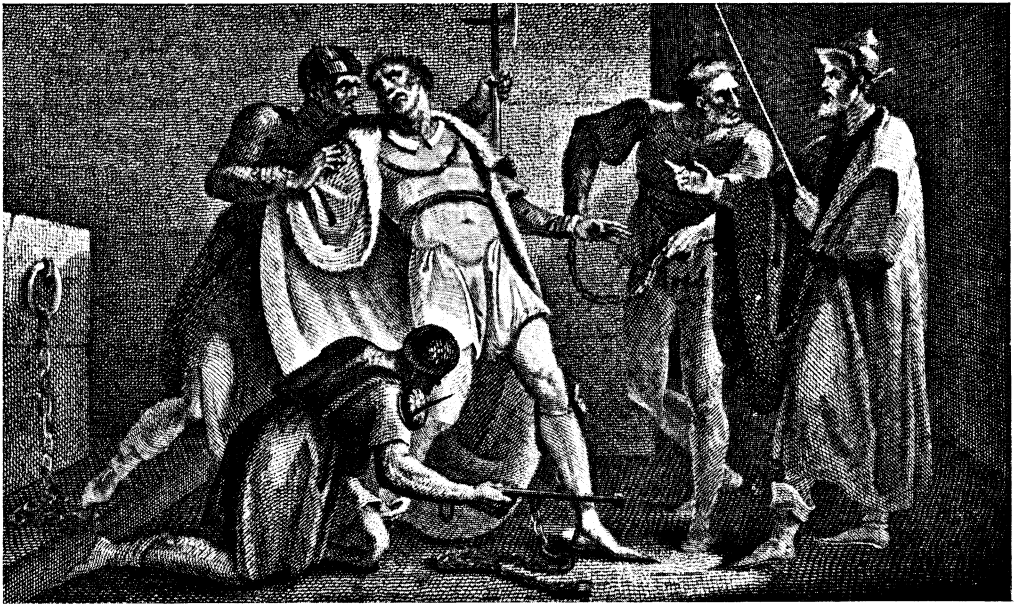


"THE HERB-STREWER AT THE CORONATION OF KING STEPHEN."  
BY T. WALTER WILSON.

condemned him, came to England and laid claim to the crown, with a large force at his back, the people's allegiance and loyalty to Henry forced the unfortunate Robert to accept the defeat of a bloodless battle, renounce his claim to the crown, and agree to a treaty. The terms were that Henry should cede his Norman possessions to his brother, who was also to receive a yearly pension of three thousand marks; that they should unite together to support each other's cause against their respective enemies, and that the survivor should succeed his brother in the event of failure of legitimate issue. Robert returned to Normandy, not uninfluenced, perchance, by the threat

did he need to do homage for his spiritualities, that to Rome must he make appeals, and from Rome only receive dictation. Anselm was willing to do homage for temporalities, and did: the question was the gift of ring and staff as representing spiritual powers. Nearly all the rest of the English bishops and clergy sided with Henry.

In 1104 Duke Robert incautiously came to England, and was so affectionately received by his brother as not to be permitted to leave the land, and at last, as price of his freedom, had to resign his annuity. He thereupon threw in his interests with those of the outlaw Bellême, who still possessed considerable power and territory in Normandy.



"THE IMPRISONMENT OF STEPHEN, 1141."

*From an old engraving.*

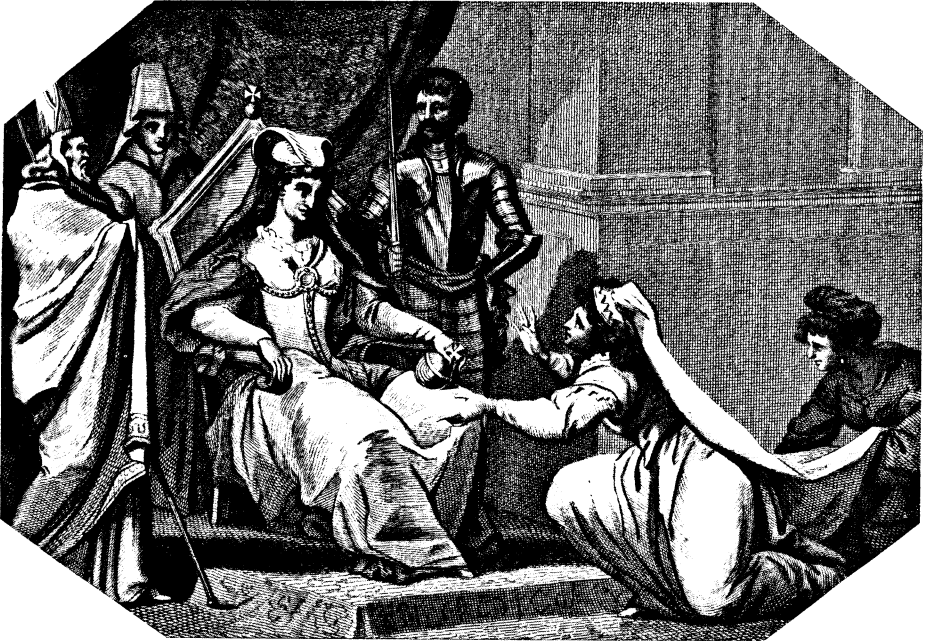
of excommunication made by Anselm, the austere Archbishop of Canterbury, who, made primate by William Rufus in 1093, had, four years later, disgusted at the profligacy of his sovereign's court, retired to Rome, whence he had been recalled by the politic Henry on his accession.

The revolt of the Norman barons, led by Robert de Bellême, was to disturb Henry's peace in 1102. The following year he and his archbishop disagreed on a question of regal or episcopal investiture by ring and crozier. Anselm boldly upholding the privileges of the Church, and standing almost alone in his contention that to Rome only

It was probably the disturbed condition of Normandy which proved irresistible to Henry's love of aggrandisement, and led to his invading that country two years after Robert's purchase of his liberty. Playing the game of predatory advancement with a skill that never comes to the orthodox player, he subdued the country, and at the battle of Tenchebrai took Robert prisoner, and confined him for the remaining twenty-eight years of his life in the castle of Cardiff. William, the only son of Robert, then a child of five years old, who was to have many partisans and to remain for many years a source of anxiety to his usurping uncle, and

a reason for his trembling for the safety of his possessions, died in 1128, and it was only after his death that Henry's rule in Normandy became firmly established. Homage was done to the lad by the Normans in 1116, an act which drew Henry into a three years' war with France, Anjou, and Flanders, as his enemies. No sooner was peace restored, and his son William invested with the duchy, and Henry triumphantly returned to England, than the young heir in whom all his hopes were centred, following his father in a different ship, was lost in that realm which "hath no king but God alone." The White

first marriage, the son whose death we have just chronicled, and a daughter, Alice, who was known afterwards by her mother's name of Matilda, and at the age of twelve married Henry V., Holy Roman Emperor. In 1125, five years after the death of Prince William, the husband of Matilda died, and two years later she married Geoffrey Plantagenet, of Anjou, the fealty of the English nation having been sworn to her as a widow and its future sovereign. These oaths were renewed on her marriage to Geoffrey, and again in 1133, when a son was born to her, afterwards Henry II., a young prince



"THE QUEEN OF KING STEPHEN PETITIONING THE EMPRESS MATILDA FOR HER HUSBAND'S RELEASE, 1141." BY G. BENEZACH.

Ship, manned by fifty able seamen, commanded by the Norman mariner, Fitzstephen, foundered at sea, and the young prince, then in his eighteenth year, his half-brother and sister, Richard and Adela, some sixteen noble ladies, and one hundred and forty knights, in all some "three hundred living souls," went "in an instant" to their doom. William

Was a prince of lust and pride,  
He showed no grace till the hour he died,

sings Rossetti, telling the story of the prince's chivalrous attempt to save his sister which caused his death. Henry, tradition says, never smiled again.

Two children were born to Henry of his

who was but two years old when, on the death of his grandfather in 1135, the Empress Matilda's claims were immediately in dispute.

Stephen of Blois was the third of the four sons of Adela, the fourth daughter of Matilda of Flanders and William the Conqueror. He was born in his grandfather's lifetime, in 1094, and was therefore, at the time of the death of his uncle, Henry I., forty-one years of age. Of his three brothers history tells us nothing beyond the fact that the eldest was content with a large dowry brought to him by his wife, that the second succeeded his father as Count de Blois, and the third, the younger brother of Stephen and his

very good friend and supporter, was first made Abbot of Glastonbury and then promoted to the bishopric of Winchester. Stephen had early attached himself to the fortunes of Henry I., had lived at his court, was popular among the people, and, which was of far greater importance, was on the spot at the time of Henry's death, whilst Matilda was not only married to a foreigner, an ancient enemy of England, the son of Fulke, Count of Anjou, with whom she was on bad terms, but was absent in her husband's possessions in Normandy. And besides all these unfavourable conditions, the rule of a

chased peace had made the barons so strong that the royal power had to be upheld by a force of mercenaries raised in Flanders, David of Scotland made a second attempt to assert Matilda's rights at the famous battle of the Standard, near North Allerton, in 1138, but was defeated. The following year Stephen besieged the castle of Lincoln, then in the hands of Ranulf, Earl of Chester, a partisan of Matilda. Escaping through the besieging army, Ranulf successfully besought the help of the Earl of Gloucester, and, with 10,000 men behind him, attacked Stephen from the rear; and although Stephen



"QUEEN MATILDA ENTREATING THE EMPRESS MATILDA FOR THE RELEASE OF HER HUSBAND, KING STEPHEN, FROM PRISON, 1141." BY J. G. HULCK.

woman was viewed adversely. Stephen was rich; a hundred thousand pounds was in the treasury, of which he took possession, and by gifts from this he confirmed the fidelity of his many friends, and his usurpation, if such it was, was clinched and sanctified by a Papal bull. Not only did the English barons take the oath of allegiance, but the Norman barons were equally loyal, and when, in the following year, Robert of Gloucester, the natural son of Henry I., induced David of Scotland to espouse the cause of his niece, Matilda, the Scottish king was opposed by an army so loyal as to give him pause.

Two years later, however, when a pur-

fought with the valour of despair, the disaffection of his cavalry brought about his defeat and personal surrender. The Earl of Gloucester presented the captive to Matilda, who loaded him with chains and sent him prisoner to the castle of Bristol, and, being full of an unwomanly malignity, turned a deaf ear to the pleadings of her own cousin and namesake, Stephen's large-hearted wife, for his freedom. Thus, while Geoffrey Plantagenet was harassing Normandy, England was plunged into the horrors of civil war. In 1139 Matilda took up her residence with Adela of Louvaine, the widowed second wife of Henry I., in her castle



of Arundel, and the first battle of the civil war, which was not to end till the treaty of Winchester, in 1153, was fought on the 2nd of February, 1141. During this period of nearly thirteen years' hostilities the fortunes of the belligerents underwent many vicissitudes. Had Matilda inherited any of the policy of her father, Stephen's reign would doubtless have ended in that first year of civil war, 1141. But she was haughty and vindictive towards those who had sworn allegiance to Stephen, and she made no attempt to con-

aid of Geoffrey of Anjou was sought fruitlessly on behalf of his wife and son. Oxford offered an asylum to Matilda, and Stephen swam the river and, with a handful of followers, put his enemies to flight. He sat down before the gates of Oxford Castle, and with the fear of starvation in front of her, the queen, clothed in white, made her escape while the fields were covered with snow.

Stephen was successful at Oxford, but was defeated at Wilton, and the struggle continued, until the pretensions of the two



"THE FLIGHT OF MATILDA FROM OXFORD CASTLE, 1142." BY C. RICKETTS.

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ciliate the wavering minds of the disaffected. She imposed heavy taxes, and scornfully refused the petitions of the people. She was acknowledged queen, but never crowned. Her entry into London was followed almost immediately by her flight from the city. The power of the Papal legate, Henry, Stephen's brother, was used against her. In an attempt on Winchester, her half-brother, Robert, was taken prisoner by the royalists, and to secure his release she gave Stephen his freedom.

The war languished, the war revived. The

combatants were solemnly adjusted when the young Prince Henry, Matilda's son, had reached his sixteenth year. He was then adopted by Stephen as his heir, on his doing homage and swearing fealty to Stephen as his monarch.

Less than a year had passed when Stephen's death took place at Canterbury in 1154, but during those months the harmony between Stephen and Matilda was complete. They visited together the chief cities of the land, "to be received at each place with solemn procession and the most joyful acclamations."

# GOOD INTENTIONS.

By MURIEL MATHIAS.



YOU know, Dick, that from the very beginning I wanted a flat!" Lena's tone was a mixture of reproachfulness and restrained irritability.

"It's all very well to talk like that, my dear," I said with some annoyance, for it was the third time the water-pipe in 29, Georgia Road had burst in six weeks, "but I'm looking at the rent!"

"I'm not," she retorted. "I'm looking at the dining-room carpet! It won't be fit for anything but the dustbin if this happens again, and you know what the landlord told you last time."

I recalled the interview to which she referred; it had been most unpleasant. But, then, our landlord is a distinctly illiterate man, and how he ever rose to the position of a property owner I have never been able to understand. I have vague suspicions, which, however, I have never been able to prove, that an emporium over which three brass balls swung was the original source from which he derived his capital, and on the previous occasions of our water-pipe's bursting he had certainly betrayed distinct traces of the usurer.

"He said, if you remember," proceeded my wife, "that next time *you* would have to pay, as it must be caused by our neglect!" She bridled with righteous indignation. "And I must say, Richard, that, considering the fact of your recent rise at the bank, I am surprised at your not having suggested a change to an establishment more in keeping with our new position."

Her scornful words roused my pride, for it was a fact that I had recently been made chief cashier in an old-established firm.

"I will write to the landlord, Lena, and in the event of his refusing to repair the pipe and replace the carpet, I——"

"I saw a flat to-day," interrupted my wife eagerly—"the sweetest place, Dick, not really dear at all, when you consider that the rates are included, even the water one!"

"That's a point in its favour, certainly," I remarked drily. "Perhaps the landlord will be more anxious not to have it spread about so lavishly if he is responsible for the amount used. What is the name of the place?"

"99, Celestial Mansions, Hampstead," replied Lena importantly.

"A most inconvenient spot for the City," I observed.

"Nonsense, Dick! There's a station at the bottom of the hill, and a Tube somewhere else; the agent told me so."

"Did you ask him where the trains from the station went to?"

"No, of course not; I was talking about the decoration of the flat. But they're sure to go to the City—all trains do."

"Perhaps," I agreed, "*eventually*, but in my case I prefer to spend as short a time on the journey as possible."

"It's a new road," continued Lena brightly—"where the flat is, I mean, and we overlook a field—so nice and healthy."

"And damp!" I interjected, but she took no notice of my remark.

"It's a very select neighbourhood, Dick. The agent told me that he was most particular about references, and only let to the *best* people; and when I told him your position, he said at once that——"

"I hope you have not taken the flat?" I interrupted suspiciously.

"No, dear, of course not. But when I got back here and found the pipe had burst again, I wired to say you would look over it to-morrow afternoon. You see, Dick, being Saturday, it's such a good opportunity."

I was not anxious to move house—it is to my mind a process that should have been included in the stages of Dante's "Inferno"—and I fervently hoped that the landlord would accede to my request about the repairing of the offending pipe. But lunch-time on the morrow brought a reply from Mr. Cohen, delivered by a messenger whose Hebraic countenance confirmed my worst suspicions regarding the nature of his master's line of business, couched in terms too offensive to admit of my adopting any but the most drastic course of action—and I went to Hampstead.

I cannot say that "Celestial Mansions" was the name I should have chosen for the aggressively brilliant block of red-brick buildings which bore it, though the back windows certainly commanded a fairly uninterrupted view of the heavens—also of the field Lena had extolled, which appeared to me to be the receptacle for all the rubbish of the neighbourhood, and a happy hunting-ground for tramps.

I pointed out this fact to the agent, who assured me that the County Council were considering the matter, and that improvements were imminent—so far as I know, they are still in the same position. But that is beside the point.

The flat itself, like most flats, was rather small, and, I thought, likely to be extremely uncomfortable, but there was no mistaking the fact that my wife had set her heart upon its acquisition.

She glossed over its deficiencies, went into raptures over its few good points, and, backed nobly by the agent, eventually persuaded me to take it.

Looking at the matter now in cold blood, I am unable to give any satisfactory explanation of my weakness—except Lena. The subsequent *contretemps* will probably crop up to the end of my days, and be just as hard to excuse—plausibly—then as it is now.

We moved into our new abode with two of its rooms unpapered, and since this fact constitutes the reason for what followed, I must explain how it came about.

Lena chose the papers, with, naturally, my approval. But my wife, amongst manifold good points, has a charming taste in household decoration, so I invariably acquiesced; and I was particularly delighted with the one she selected for our bedroom and my dressing-room, which opened into each other.

It happened, however, to be a paper that our new landlord objected to on the ground of expense, and, determined to show my independence from the commencement of my tenancy, I was curt with him.

"I have decided to have the design my wife has selected, Mr. Adams," I concluded definitely. Then, seeing a look of admiration on Lena's face, I added: "I will therefore paper them myself."

"Who will you employ?" inquired Lena, after the landlord had departed without making any effort to dissuade me from spending money on the improvement of his property.

"I will buy the paper to-morrow," I

replied, "and make inquiries about a man to hang it."

"I wish it could be done before the Browns come to dinner," sighed my wife. "I did so much want them to be really impressed, Dick, because he is in a position to do such a lot to push you."

"But, my dear, the dining-room is papered and furnished!" I remarked, in some astonishment.

"Of course I know that. Don't be silly, Dick! But naturally I should have liked to show Mrs. Brown all over the flat, because then she would be sure to tell him afterwards how nice the other rooms were as well as the dining-room."

I am bound to confess that such a possibility would never have occurred to me, but women are subtle creatures.

"When are they coming?" I asked, for I determined to indulge Lena's innocent desire if possible.

"On Friday," she replied, "and this is Tuesday. Do try to get it done in time, dear!"

"I'll do my best," I assured her, and, as subsequent events will prove, I did.

To begin with, I purchased the paper on my way to business next day, and also made arrangements with the firm to send a man to look at the rooms and give me an estimate for the job, but when I returned to Celestial Mansions, Lena informed me that not even the paper had arrived.

I must admit that I was as much annoyed as my wife, for I had fully expected the work to be commenced early on Thursday morning, which, of course, was now out of the question.

I rang up the firm before dinner. They were on the point of closing, and assured me that one of their *employés* had spent hours in a vain endeavour to find Celestial Mansions, and they would be obliged to charge me for his wasted time, as the directions I had given them as to the flat's whereabouts were obviously insufficient.

I omitted the latter remark in relating the result to my wife, but reminded her how I had, from the first, considered Hampstead an inconvenient spot in which to reside.

Nothing further could be done that night, but I promised to call on the firm again next morning, Thursday, and speak strongly with regard to the work being completed by Friday afternoon; but on my way to the City, a curious paragraph in the morning paper gave me cause for anxiety.

It was the account of an ingenious robbery which had taken place in the Hampstead

vicinity, the thief having induced the servant to admit him, in the absence of her mistress, by representing that he was a paperhanger, and, having actually gone to the length of taking in a bucket of paste, a brush, etc., had eventually got away with a quantity of valuables, and was still at large.

This last piece of information made me feel very uneasy, and when I called on the firm I proposed to employ, I left them my card, with strict instructions that the man they sent to Celestial Mansions was to present it, and also despatched a wire to Lena to that effect.

The evening, however, revealed the fact that there had been no signs of either man or paper, and Lena wept unrestrainedly with bitter disappointment. At breakfast on Friday her depression had, if anything, increased, and I left for business in a very vexed condition.

"I am going out to meet Mrs. Brown after lunch, Dick. We thought of having tea in the West End, and then she will come back with me in time for dinner," she said to me tearfully at parting.

"Do, my dear," I replied warmly. "The change will cheer you up, and I am sure you can trust Eliza to see to the dinner, if she is told exactly what is required. I am sorry about the paper, but——"

"If you had really tried, I believe you could have saved me the disappointment!" she interrupted in reproachful tones, and her words, besides giving me pain, rankled in my mind all the morning.

It was Stuart who was really responsible for what happened later, because, when I chanced to mention my annoyance about the papering to him, he said lightly—

"Why don't you do it yourself?"

"Do it myself?" I echoed.

"Yes, it's quite easy, and saves no end of fuss and money. I papered a room at my place in half an hour once."

The idea grew on me, especially when I remembered that the firm from whom I had purchased the paper had mentioned a whole day as being required for the job. Evidently they intended to swindle me, and I imagined Lena's delighted surprise, on returning home with Mrs. Brown, to find the rooms done.

I got the afternoon off, and went to fetch the paper, the last roll of which, I then discovered, had only arrived that morning, hence the delay.

"You need not trouble about supplying the labour," I told the man. "I am going

back to Celestial Mansions now, to paper the rooms myself before tea."

He smiled, and it irritated me.

"Have you ever done such work before, sir?"

"No," I replied curtly; "but I am told that its difficulty is usually exaggerated by people who make it a profession."

He bowed.

"You have our telephone number, sir, so that in the event of your requiring any assistance——"

"I shall not," I interrupted, and left the shop with a boy, who floundered along behind me beneath the huge parcel of paper.

On arrival at Hampstead I put it in the cloak room, and started off to purchase the necessary utensils for my task, which I discovered in an oil-shop close at hand.

The proprietor, a most obliging man, seemed really interested, and besides sending a boy with a truck to fetch the parcel from the station, offered to make me a bucket of paste and lend me the right sort of apron.

All these articles were deposited on the truck, and, accompanied by the boy pushing it, I reached Celestial Mansions, and, letting myself in, had everything arranged in the first scene of action—the dressing-room—where I was glad to see that Lena had already placed a pair of steps.

I looked at my watch—four o'clock—and it struck me for the first time that the flat was gloomy, and that I should have to make the most of the daylight which remained.

Eliza was not audible in any direction, a fact that pleased me rather, as it would make the ultimate surprise to my household all the greater.

I reckoned half an hour for the dressing-room, with, perhaps, an hour for the bedroom, leaving a margin of half an hour for clearing away the paste, etc.; and an inward glow of pride consumed me as I pictured the look of delight on my wife's face when I met her in the hall on her return with the information that "The rooms were done." Dear Lena! How she would appreciate my endeavour to save her from disappointment, after all! And I started with a will.

Before the dressing-room was half covered I wished heartily that I had put on my oldest clothes for the job, and began to seriously suspect Stuart's veracity regarding the speed with which he hung paper. The paste worried me most; it seemed to take a malicious delight in retarding my progress by persistently spreading itself over every-

thing in the room—except the right side of the paper.

At length I triumphed. The first room was done, and, seated on the top of the steps, I surveyed the result of my labours.

It left a little to be desired, I must admit. The paper was a difficult pattern to join, for one thing, and, being of an "Empire" design, the delicate colourings had "run" in places. Still, I was, on the whole, more than pleased with the general effect, and was about to descend from the steps, with a view to commencing afresh, when the bedroom door suddenly opened, disclosing a woman whom I had never seen before in my life.

She wore a wonderful tea-gown, and long golden hair streamed over her shoulders.

There was a moment's awful pause as I stared at her aghast, then she gave a piercing shriek, and darted to the other door by which I had entered the dressing-room.

"Jane!" she screamed frantically, "Jane! The thief is here! Fetch the police! I'll hold him until they come!"

"Madam," I exclaimed, as the horrible truth dawned upon me, "you are mistaken; I thought I was in my own flat."

"Don't you try and 'swank' me, my man," she responded, with a distinct American accent; "I've met your sort before. Guess you're after my rings; but you've miscalculated this journey."

"My dear lady——" I commenced, when the sound of footsteps rapidly ascending the stairs outside interrupted me, and next instant Jane, accompanied by a policeman, entered the room.

"Now, then," he began, as the golden-haired proprietress pointed to me triumphantly, "come down off them steps!"

"Stand back, man!" I replied sternly, waving him off with the brush. It was a perfectly natural movement on my part, but a large lump of paste, which still adhered to the bristles, flew off and struck him full on the nose.

I know the odour of paste is not pleasant, though I scarcely think the fact justified the roar of rage that policeman gave as he knocked the steps from under me, and, producing a pair of handcuffs, snapped them upon my wrists.

"Come along!" he cried roughly, dragging me from amongst the rolls of paper, upon which I had fallen. "You'll be sorry for this. Assaulting the police, that's the charge that'll be added to your other game now."

"My good man," I answered, with as much dignity as the circumstances and my

dilapidated attire would permit, "you are exceeding your duty. I assure you that I am only in this lady's room because——"

"You'd better shut up and come quietly," he interrupted, pulling me to the door. "Anything you say will be used in evidence against you."

Preposterous though the whole thing was, I saw plainly that further argument in front of the women was useless, and, determining to speak forcibly to the man outside, submitted to being led downstairs to the main entrance. Having reached it, I endeavoured to explain the real situation of affairs, but in the middle of my first sentence I heard steps on the gravelled walk.

In the anguish of recent events I had forgotten the passage of time, and now, to my intense horror, I saw that the arrivals were Mrs. Brown and Lena.

They looked at me curiously, at first without recognition, and I realised painfully what an enormous difference the last two hours must have made in my appearance.

"Oh," gasped my wife at last, "it's—it's Dick!"

"Do you know this man, ma'am?" demanded the policeman.

"Know him?" echoed she indignantly. "Of course I do—he's my husband!"

The constable's face softened.

"I'm sorry for you, ma'am. I've just took him in the act of trying to steal a lady's diamond rings!"

I saw Mrs. Brown's mouth shut with a snap, and the expression on her face stung me beyond measure.

"Constable," I said sternly, "your statement is absolutely without foundation, and the fact of the lady having sent for you under an altogether wrong impression is no excuse for not speaking the truth."

"Then you *were* in someone's room!" exclaimed Lena.

"Under a misapprehension, my dear, I—I was on the steps when the lady came into the room."

"What were you doing on the steps?" she demanded in amazement.

"Nothing," I replied—"at least, not at the moment." Then, as I saw a curious gleam in her eyes, I added desperately: "I had been papering the room!"

The constable grinned, but, luckily for him, the handcuffs obviated any possibility of retaliation on my part.

"If you take my advice, ma'am, you won't believe a word of it," he remarked to Lena. "This ain't the only job he's wanted for."



"There was a moment's awful pause as I stared at her aghast."



The heartless falsehood was too much for my wife, and as I was led away, I saw her sink swooning into the arms of Mrs. Brown.

Though I should prefer to draw a veil over what followed, it is necessary to disclose a few of the unpleasant facts.

At the police station I am sure that, but for my appearance, the inspector in charge would have believed my story; but owing to it, he evidently felt convinced that I was the man still at large whose crime I had read about on the previous morning, and absolutely refused to listen to reason.

I was locked in a cell, and about an hour afterwards Brown arrived, with the information that my wife was in violent hysterics, and a request for enlightenment.

I explained the real facts to him, and after a moment's pause he went off into peals of laughter.

"I do not see the joke," I observed stiffly, when his untimely mirth showed signs of subsiding.

"Sorry, my boy," he gasped, "but I couldn't help it. Of course it's not a joke, really, and I'm afraid there's no earthly chance of getting you out of here to-night. You'll have to go before the magistrate in the morning, I feel sure, and I should strongly advise you to let me engage a barrister on your behalf, to question Miss Crystaline P. Montmorency, who is, I hear, one of the chorus ladies at the Frivolity, and evidently under the impression that this episode will be a big advertisement for her."

"Give my love to Lena," I said wearily, as he rose to go, "and do whatever you think best."

How my poor little wife survived that awful night I don't pretend to understand, but, for myself, I slept. The manual labour

of the afternoon, added to the mental agitation of subsequent events, proved too much for my overwrought frame.

Under the able cross-questioning of my counsel next morning, Miss Crystaline P. Montmorency was forced to admit that, suffering from a severe headache, for which she had taken a sleeping-draught, she had slumbered undisturbed until after five on the previous afternoon, and on leaving her bedroom had only discovered me on top of the step-ladder, in a room that contained nothing of any value except the wall-paper and paste bucket.

How the news of the unfortunate affair had spread I have never been able to discover, though I suspect Brown; but as I stood in the dock, and looked round the crowded court before I was discharged—with an apology—it appeared to me that everyone I had ever met, including Stuart and the man who had lent me the apron, was present.

Lena was waiting outside in a cab, and we drove home to Celestial Mansions almost in silence. Only when we entered our dining-room, where luncheon was spread, did she make any reference to my endeavour to please her.

"I've been reckoning it all up, Dick," she said calmly, "and I think, counting in the counsel's expenses and the wasted material, that the cost of paper for our two rooms will be about a pound a roll."

I felt too weak to argue, so I helped myself to a whisky and soda before I answered.

"I've no doubt you are right, my dear, but I fear you don't understand why I attempted the papering."

"Yes, I do," she exclaimed unexpectedly, "you dear old thing!" and, flinging her arms round my neck suddenly, she kissed me.

## SPRING.

**F**AIR Lady April, lightly tread,  
And sing your lays in minor key—  
For aged March is just now dead:  
Sing a dirge-like melody.  
To his bier bring brightest flowers,  
Weep for him refreshing showers:  
Strip your fields and aye your bowers,  
Sing a mournful melody.

Bright Lady April, lead your train  
Of wild bluebell and pale primrose,  
Of daffodillies from the lane,  
The sweetest flower that blows—  
And with them all a measure tread.  
Sing your songs in minor key:  
That you might live, is he now dead,  
Each lightly kiss his aged head  
And sing a mournful melody.

EILY ESMONDE.



EXTREMELY AWKWARD.

"AREN'T you coming to church with us?"

"My dear, I can't possibly. Not a soul in the house has got a threepenny bit."

## THE EDITOR'S SCRAP-BOOK.

### THE COMET'S TAIL.

*By Jessie Pope.*

WHEN Miss Proctor, whose career as a chaperon had hitherto been unblemished, invited a select party to go with them to Platt's Hill, a neighbouring eminence, to look for the comet, she thought she was arranging an absolutely innocuous and instructive little festivity, and Eileen, her golden-haired nineteen-year-old charge, thought so too. For the party was to consist of Eileen and her chaperon, Miss Warburton, a maiden lady who, though nearly seventy, was quite kittenish for her years, and for their escort and protector the son of a respected neighbour, a boy of fifteen, who wore shorts and spectacles, and was, in fact, the patrol leader of the "Black Bulls," the local Boy Scouts.

Miss Proctor congratulated herself that the party could not have been chosen with more discretion; but—alas for the schemes of mice, men, and chaperons!—just as they were starting, young Jerry Hodgson, articulated clerk at Sharp and Twiggs, the lawyers, dropped in quite unexpectedly to inquire after Miss Proctor's health, as she had been noticeably suffering from a slight catarrh last

Sunday in church. No sooner had he heard of their expedition than this fly in the ointment immediately expressed an intense desire to help them find the comet, declaring himself to be an excellent hand at scientific investigation. Miss Proctor, after a doubtful moment, accepted his services, and asked him to give Miss Warburton his arm, while she went on first with Eileen at a brisk pace, though the girl seemed inclined to lag, while the rheumatism in Miss Warburton's knees effectually circumvented Mr. Hodgson's veiled attempts to hurry. Armed with a stout broomstick, the Boy Scout stalked ahead and led them with unerring aim straight to Platt's Hill.

The night was dark, but the sky clear, and the conditions excellent for comet finding. Miss Proctor focused her glasses, and, thrilling with expectation, began to sweep the heavens. At length her search was rewarded, and she stood rapt in admiration and wonder at the beauty of our celestial visitor.

So absorbed was she that some minutes elapsed before she missed Eileen; and when she turned quickly to find her, she stepped inadvertently into a ditch, and it took the Boy Scout and Miss Warburton, with broom-

stick and umbrella, quite ten minutes to extract her. However, Eileen answered at once when called, her voice coming away from the left, where she said she had moved to get a better place, and was enjoying a fine view. It was then that Miss Warburton missed her cavalier, though she could not say when she last saw him. But to Miss Proctor's evident relief *his* answer to the Scout's calls and whistles came from the right, and when he rejoined the party some time after Eileen, he admitted he had not been able to find the comet at all.

Miss Warburton, who by that time, however, had become distinctly peevish, and had changed from a kitten to a cat, declared she could feel the dampstriking up; so they all returned home, two and two, in the same order as they came. But at the door, to compensate Jerry Hodgson's evident disappointment at not seeing the comet, Miss Proctor asked him to come in and join them in a cup of cocoa.

It was while they were discussing this excellent beverage in particular and comets in general, that the Boy Scout suddenly fastened his penetrating eye on the article clerk's manly chest.

"Well, Mr. Hodgson," he exclaimed, "you may not have seen the comet, but you have certainly brought a bit of its tail away with you."

All eyes followed his glance, and indeed there was attached to the top button of Jerry Hodgson's fancy waistcoat a golden floating nebulousness about nine inches in length.

Everybody peered forward to examine this extraordinary phenomenon more closely, until a little startled, warning exclamation from Eileen made the article clerk recoil from before them. But the Boy Scout was too quick for him, and, snatching the glittering golden film from his waistcoat button, waved it triumphantly aloft.

It was Eileen's fringe net!



NOT SO BAD AS IT SEEMS.

EPICURE: Here, waiter, take this soup away; there's a fly in it.  
WAITER: Bless ye, sir, that's not a fly; it's only a bit o' dirt!



SPINSTER JANE was being consoled with because she had no husband.

"Save your pity," she said independently. "I have a dog that growls, a parrot that swears, and a lamp that smokes."



SMALL BOY (at Lord's, before play has started): Where are the cricketers, daddy?

DADDY (impatient): They're in the pavilion, and it's quite time they began. I wonder what they're doing all this while?

SMALL BOY: I expect they're "picking up sides," daddy.



A LOCAL preacher in a Yorkshire village took for his subject the choosing of David by the prophet Samuel, and described his youthful beauty very graphically as being "ruddy and of a fair countenance." He went on to explain that first he was ruddy, that is to say, "he was ruddy for every good word and work," and, secondly, he was fair, "that is, he was just and fair in all his d'alins." And the application was as practical as it is obvious.

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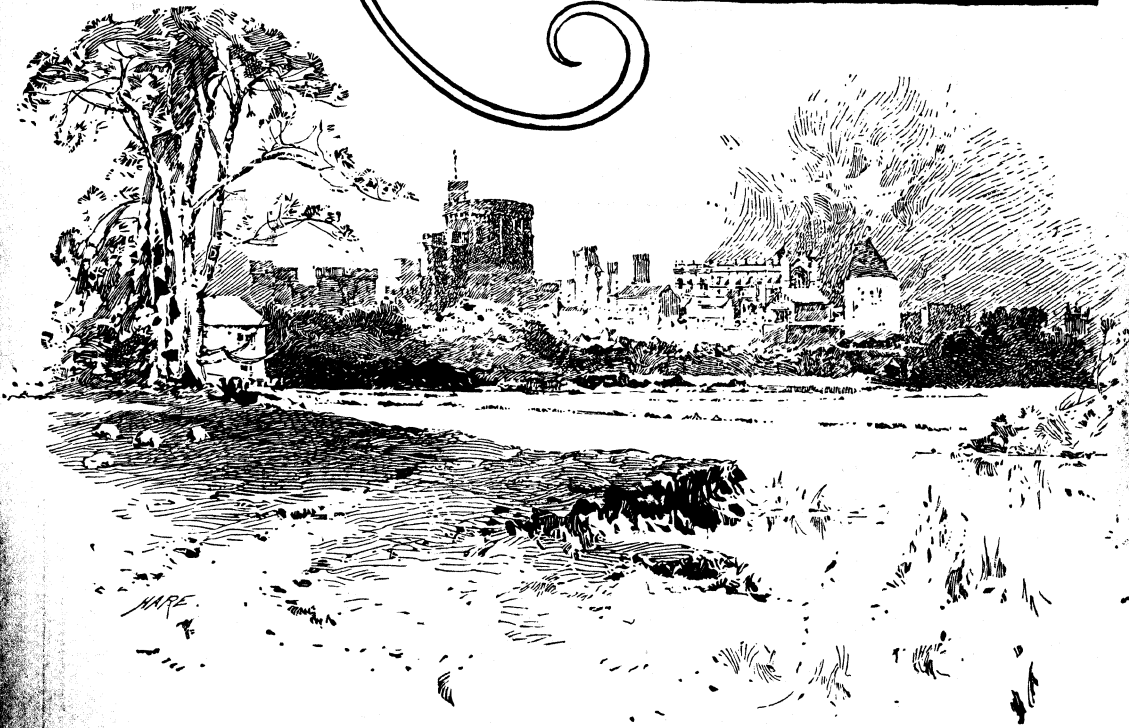
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**Comes out a ribbon, lies flat on the brush.**

**DELICIOUS. ANTISEPTIC.**

42 in. of Cream in trial tube sent for 2d. in stamps.

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Makers of Cashmere Bouquet Toilet Soap.

Est. 1806.



**PREVENT ILLNESS!**

In hot weather, a smell will warn you of an insanitary condition; in cold weather, a severe illness will give you the same warning. The continual use of Kerol will prevent the smell in hot weather; and the illness in cold weather. Do not wait for the warning!

Use Kerol day by day throughout the year—use it now! It is safe, and instantly kills off all disease germs. Wash your floors, walls, and paintwork; rinse your lavatories, basins, and sinks; sluice your water-closets and drains with Kerol. Use a solution of Kerol when cleaning clothes. Pour a few drops into your bath. Apply some to your skin when cut—it will reduce inflammation immediately. Use it whenever and wherever absolute cleanliness is necessary.



**KEROL**

**THE SAFEGUARD OF YOUR HOME**

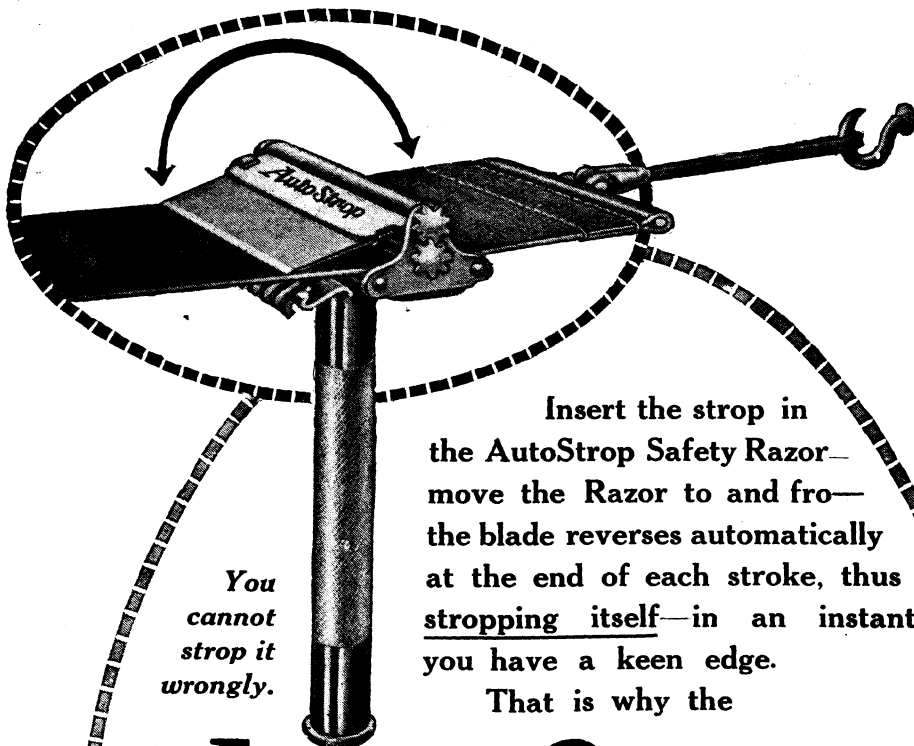
The real disinfectant—non-poisonous and non-corrosive, but absolutely deadly to disease germs, being 24 times stronger than pure carbolic acid when tested against the diphtheria germ.

**A 1/- Bottle makes 30 Gallons of Efficient Disinfectant Fluid.**

**FREE SAMPLE BOX** of Kerol, Kerol Toilet Soap, Kerol Shaving Stick and Lano-Kerol sent post free on receipt of 3d. in stamps for postage and packing.

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*You  
cannot  
strop it  
wrongly.*

Insert the strop in  
the AutoStrop Safety Razor—  
move the Razor to and fro—  
the blade reverses automatically  
at the end of each stroke, thus  
stropping itself—in an instant  
you have a keen edge.

That is why the

# AutoStrop

## SAFETY RAZOR

always gives a smooth and luxurious shave. And the AutoStrop user avoids  
continual outlay for new blades—required by any ordinary safety razor  
There is nothing to take apart to strop or clean. Far quicker, handier  
and cheaper than a no-stropping razor.

Sold by all high-class dealers. You see it everywhere.

The Standard Outfit consists of quadruple  
silver-plated, self-stropping razor; one  
dozen specially tested lancet-steel blades;  
one horsehide strop; the whole contained  
in handsome leather case, size 2 in.  
by 3 3/4 in. The price complete is

**21/-**  
and no  
further  
expense.

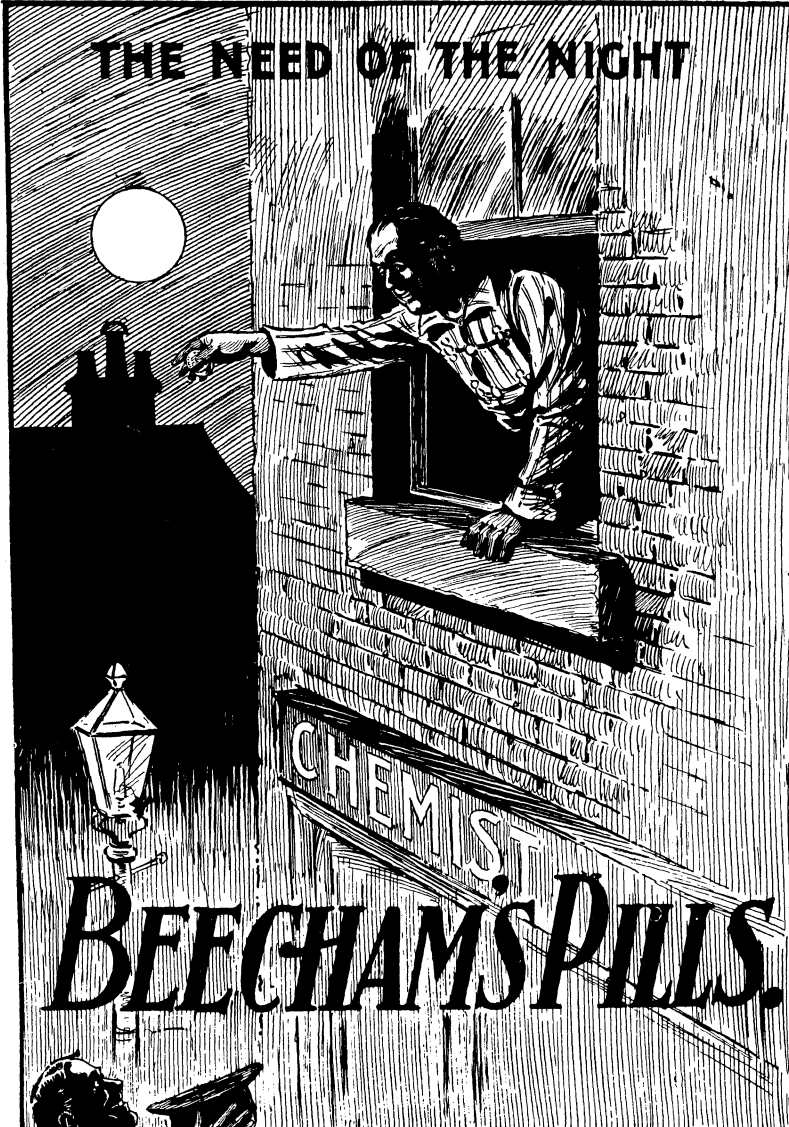
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*Address Dept. W.M.*

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61 New Oxford Street, London, W.C.  
Also at Dublin, Paris,  
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THE NEED OF THE NIGHT



CHEMIST

**BEECHAM'S PILLS.**



**A Question for  
the Cook.**

Does she know that her cakes  
and pastries will be daintier,  
more delicious, more diges-  
tible, and keep longer and  
fresher if made with

**BORWICK'S**  
**BAKING POWDER ?**

ONLY THE BEST IS  
GOOD ENOUGH FOR THE  
. . INVENTORS OF .

**BERMALINE**  
**BREAD.**

IS ANY LESS GOOD  
ENOUGH FOR YOU ?

A TRIAL SOLICITED.



### THE UNNECESSARY PART.

THE SKIPPER OF THE LUGGER (who along with the boy has been deputed by our deep-sea fishing party to get in provisions): There you are, sir—two demijohns an' a case o' whisky, a dozen of hale, a dozen hof stout, a bottle of port, two bottles of brandy, an' a box o' biscuits.

THE SCOTCH MEMBER: A box of biscuits, forsooth! That's the warst o' sendin' a muckle figure o' fun like you a message. What are we gaun tae do wi' a' that food?

# FOR WOMEN OF QUALITY- LISSUE HANDKERCHIEFS

The soft permanent finish of both white and indelible-coloured Lissue Handkerchiefs is secured through special chemical process in weaving, and will withstand any amount of laundering. It retains its delightful feel and appearance until worn out. Of cobweb daintiness,

6½d. each at all high-class drapers'. If your Draper hasn't Lissue Handkerchiefs, send his address to "Lissue," 132, Cheapside, London, Proprietors, Tootal Broadhurst Lee Co., Ltd., and they will see that you are supplied at once.



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PYRAMID HANDKERCHIEFS FOR MEN OF TASTE





John W. Gillingham

#### HARD LINES.

"THAT'S a terrible calamity of Brady's."  
 "Phwat's up wid him?"  
 "Shure, he snores so loud thot it kapes him from goin' to slape."

#### MAKING AN APRIL SHOWER.

They gathered together,  
 To talk of the weather—  
 Four goblins with little black caps on.  
 The first said: "It's funny  
 To have days so sunny;  
 I think I must turn all my taps on."

Said one with a frown: "Your  
 Right regular downpour,  
 With hailstones as well, would be better.  
 And though I suggest it,  
 You never could best it,  
 By adding some hail, t'would be wetter!"

"Not bad! I'm a-thinking,"  
 The third said, a-winking;  
 "But that should come down all a-slanting.  
 Of wind I'm the master;  
 The storm will be faster  
 If I add by gustily panting."

"'Twill be the more gladsome,  
 If I will just add some  
 Bright sunshine." The last spoke with power.  
 Then all set to working—  
 Not one of them shirking  
 His duty. Result—April shower.

C. W. Miles.

#### PLAYING WITH CHILDREN.

ON Bank Holidays I watch families playing cricket in the parks. Invariably the father has the bat. The good man defends his stumps against infant bowlers as though playing in a six-days' international at Melbourne. If the game be football, he is puffing along kicking the ball, and his little ones have only a remote chance of getting near it. There are a very few people who play with children upon altruistic lines, and these make a worse mess of it than the others. Playing simply to please, their interest is feigned, and at every possibility they cheat against themselves. The small playfellows detect this, and their own interest is destroyed. Thus the egoist won't let them play; the altruist kills their desire to.



A SMALL boy who had scratched his name on the paint of a standing motor-car had been cuffed by the motorist for his pains. His wailings attracted a crowd, through which his father elbowed a path, exclaiming in furious tones—

"Oo struck my boy? Show 'im to me—show me the man 'oo struck my boy!"

The motorist stood up; he was six foot two in his socks, and forty-nine round the chest.

"I did," he said.

"Serve him right, sir!" said the man, touching his cap; "and I'll give the varmint another when I get 'im 'ome."



#### AFTER THE EXCURSION.

THE SQUIRE: Well, Sam, what did you think of the metropolis?

SAM: Zur?

THE SQUIRE: How did you like the metropolis, Sam?

SAM: 'Twarn't open, zur.

# THE ROMANTIC CAREER OF EUGEN SANDOW.

HOW THE ILLNESSES OF YOUNG AND OLD ARE CURED WITHOUT MEDICINE OF ANY KIND. A SPECIAL OFFER TO ALL READERS.



R. AUBREY HUNT, the artist, one day in 1889, whilst painting in Venice, met a particularly fine muscular young man, and in the course of conversation mentioned that his new ac-

quaintance might well come to London to try conclusions with a professional strong man who was at the time offering £1,000 to anyone who could equal his feats of strength. He little thought what was to be the ultimate effect of this short, accidental chat. The fine young specimen of human power and physique was Eugen Sandow.

Full of the flush and youth and conscious strength given by magnificent health, and a body the symmetrical and muscular develop-

ments of which have never been equalled in the present day, and probably were at no time excelled even in the olden times of Herculean Grecian athletes, Sandow was ambitious. So it came about that London was startled by the announcement that an unknown young man had accepted the challenge of its celebrated champion strong man.

## EARLY SUCCESSES.

How, before an audience so vast as has at no time before or since been crowded into the immense London Aquarium, Sandow with ease eclipsed all the feats of the challenger is a matter of history.

The furore which his appearance in the leading towns of Great Britain and the United States of America afterwards created will also be in the memory of most readers.

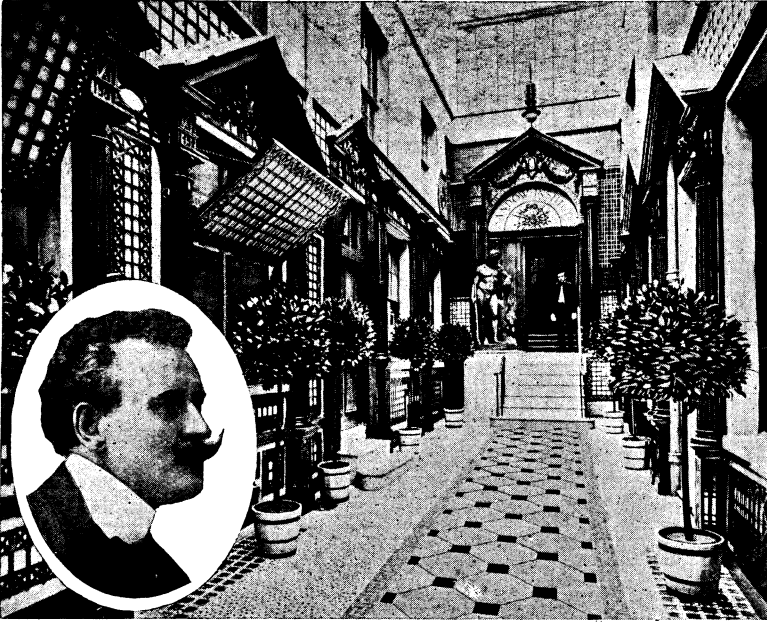
His continual adding of new record to record was such that, within a couple of years of his first startling public appearance, all over the world the name Sandow became a synonym of colossal strength. In this he scored point number one of his ambitions, but only point number one.

## THE MEANS TO THE END.

Mr. Sandow realised from the beginning that every man and every woman could vastly improve his or her health and physique as he had done himself, for at the age of ten he was a delicate little lad. He had the shrewd foresight to discern that by



A MEETING OF DISTINGUISHED DOCTORS TO HEAR THE GREAT EXPONENT OF CURATIVE PHYSICAL CULTURE LECTURE UPON THE SUBJECT OF HIS WORK. MR. SANDOW ILLUSTRATED HIS REMARKS WITH A LIVING MODEL.



MR. EUGEN SANDOW AND HIS LONDON HEADQUARTERS. FOR TWENTY YEARS MR. SANDOW HAS BEEN URGING THE IMPORTANCE OF SCIENTIFIC EXERCISE AS A MEANS OF CURING CERTAIN ILLNESSES. PATIENTS HAVE ALWAYS EXTOLLED HIS SYSTEM, AND INVALIDS IN INCREASING NUMBER ARE SEEKING ADVICE. THE SANDOW INSTITUTE IN ST. JAMES' STREET, LONDON, S.W., IS UNDOUBTEDLY THE MOST WONDERFUL CURATIVE ESTABLISHMENT IN THE WORLD.

Science of Curative Physical Exercise in the character of a natural institution.

Beyond a doubt the Sandow drugless method of treating illness in so many of its forms has effected a radical change in the old-established ideas of remedial treatment, not solely in the mind of the lay public but also in that of the medical profession.

#### THE CURATIVE CLAIMS OF SCIENTIFIC EXERCISE.

Indeed, at the present time, there are no fewer than 600 or 700 practising doctors who

making for himself a world-wide name as the most perfect physical man living he would stand a far better chance of achieving his ambitious aim of a regenerated human race, physical and mental, than by any other means.

Mr. Sandow has always been a thinker. He studied the human frame anatomically and physiologically, and worked out the why and the wherefore of every action, and the influence of scientific exercise upon weakness and disease, so that now the medical world has been convinced of his skill and knowledge and the soundness of his methods.

It seems probable that the name of Eugen Sandow will be handed down to posterity not as the strong man, but as the greatest healer of civilisation's ailments, and the founder of a curative system unequalled throughout the world, by which sufferers are cured of their illnesses, no matter in what part of the globe they may reside, without drugs, visits to expensive spas, diet restrictions, or the interference in any irksome way with the habits or occupations of those treated.

As the result of many years' strenuous labour he has built up a unique organisation which has gradually come to be regarded by those who have watched the progress of the

include amongst their prescriptions for certain ailments advice to "take a course of Sandow's exercise," which is regarded amongst medical men as the most important adjunct of modern medical science.

Mr. Sandow's ideal is that the practice of educational and curative physical culture shall before long become universal, and with this object ever in view he has associated with himself in the work of his Institute many clever co-workers, all of them men who have been studying with him for years, and who have rendered valuable service in the development of the science in its different branches. Each of these is now an expert, who has had experience second only to that of Mr. Sandow himself. This fact has two significances: it assures the permanent perpetuation of the results of Mr. Sandow's work, and enables a far greater number of people to benefit at present by the work carried on at the Institute in the full confidence that everyone connected with the treatment is most highly qualified in the science.

It must be clearly understood that Curative Physical Culture is by no means advocated as a cure-all, but as regards certain ailments and conditions, which are fully

dealt with in a Library of Health, which has been prepared for free circulation to all who may be suffering from any of them, it is admitted to be the safest, pleasantest, most economical, and most certain means of securing relief and effecting a cure.

The highest official confirmation exists of the claim that during recent years thousands upon thousands of cases of Digestive Disorder, Nervous Breakdown of varied types in both men and women, Uric Acid Complaints, Heart Troubles and Circulatory Disorders, Obesity, Chest and Lung Weakness, Physical Deformities and Spinal Curvatures, Kidney Disorders, and the Special Ailments of Women, and cases of general physical deficiency, have been treated with such highly successful results by the Sandow method as to prove beyond doubt that this is the surest treatment for such illnesses.

#### NO WEIGHT-LIFTING OR STRENUOUS EXERTION.

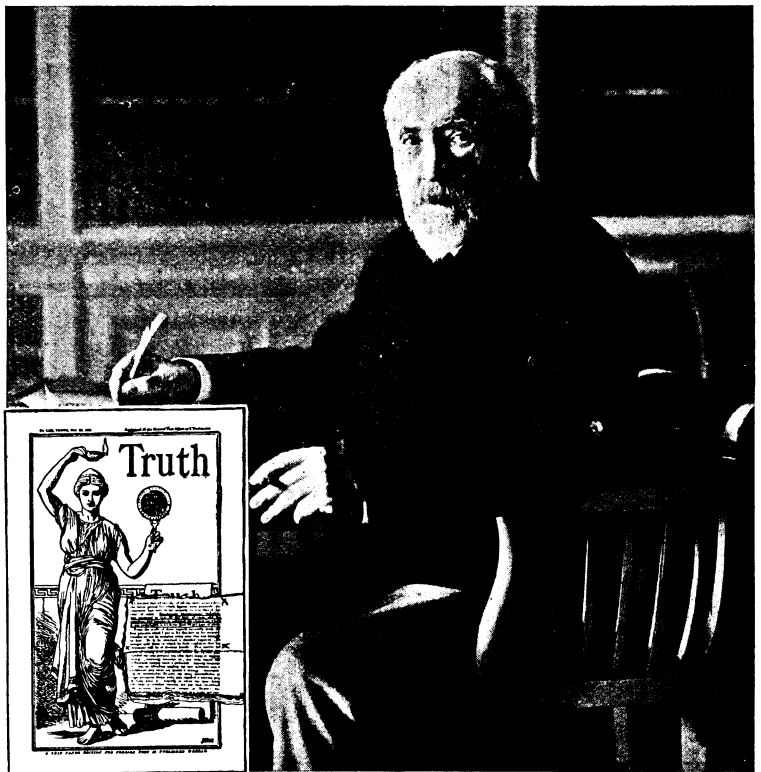
Let us, then, inquire for a moment into the ways and means by which all this has been brought about. There is still an idea abroad that Curative Physical Culture involves violent or protracted exercise. No greater fallacy could be. There are no heavy weights to lift, no strenuous exertions to be made; the treatment is so gentle and graduated that it may be taken by a child of five or a man or woman of eighty-five years of age. The exercises are not arranged upon any set rule, but are in every instance carefully graduated to exactly accord with the strength and condition of the patient, and there is no possibility of a strain. How carefully they are regulated to the requirements of the most delicate men, women, and children

may be gathered from the interesting fact that medical men are regularly sending heart cases to undertake the Sandow treatment. Indeed, Sandow Physical Exercise is also recognised as the safest and surest method in which the more frequently met with digestive, nervous, and functional disorders can be remedied.

#### A BOON TO THE MIDDLE-AGED AND ELDERLY.

To the man who has led a strenuous life, either at home or in one of the Services abroad, and who at the age of forty-five or fifty naturally looks forward to a healthy middle age, but finds, as so many do, that his vigour is distinctly on the wane, that the trials to which he has subjected his system in either work or pleasure are now beginning to have a marked effect upon his health and strength, Sandow Physical Exercise is invaluable. There is no other way in which youth may be so surely and pleasantly maintained or renewed.

A large proportion of patients, taking this



Photo]

[Half Tones Ltd.

A RECENT PORTRAIT OF MR. HENRY LABOUCHERE, THE PROPRIETOR OF "TRUTH," WHICH NEWSPAPER, AFTER A CAREFUL INVESTIGATION, SAYS THAT 99 OUT OF 100 PEOPLE WHO TAKE THE SANDOW TREATMENT FOR THE DRUGLESS CURE OF ANY AILMENT ARE SUBSTANTIALLY BENEFITED, AND 94 OUT OF 100 ENTIRELY CURED.

treatment either at the London Institute or in their own homes, are men and women between the ages of forty-five and sixty-five, while many elderly people, right up to eighty and eighty-five years of age, have found that there is no reason why good health and a considerable measure of vigour should not be attained up to the close of life as the result of a gentle course of Curative Physical Culture.

### THE MOST SUCCESSFUL CURE.

Some while back "Truth" newspaper organised a searching investigation into the records of cases which had been treated at the Sandow Institute and by correspondence with the result that it was discovered that the phenomenal percentage of 99 cases out of every 100 accepted for treatment had received substantial benefit, and that 94 in every 100 had entirely achieved the object for which the treatment had been taken.

### \* TREATMENT BY CORRESPONDENCE.

By far the greater number of people treated find themselves, because they reside at a distance, unable to visit Mr. Sandow's

famous headquarters in London, and it is for the assistance of these that the Health Library, the titles of which are given on this page, has been specially prepared. Those who fill in and forward the form below will receive a copy of the volume desired gratis and

post free, together with free advice, and, if suitable, courses of treatment will then be planned and forwarded to the sufferer to be carried out at home.

No fee is charged. No payment is necessary until the patient has decided upon taking a course, and then the charge is within everybody's means.

However, first of all, those who suffer from any complaint should write for the particular booklet in the Sandow Health Library which deals with the illness

on which advice is desired. The book will give all the information necessary to fill the mind with the nature and scope of the great work accomplished by Curative Exercise, and enable the reader to form an idea as to whether the Sandow system is applicable to his or her case or not.

### The Titles of the Booklets in the Sandow Health Library for which application is invited are:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Indigestion and Dyspepsia.                 | 13. Lack of Vigour.                       |
| 2. Constipation and its Cure.                 | 14. Physical Deformities in Men.          |
| 3. Liver Troubles.                            | 15. Physical Deformities in Women.        |
| 4. Nervous Disorders in Men.                  | 16. Functional Defects in Speech.         |
| 5. Nervous Disorders in Women.                | 17. Circulatory Disorders.                |
| 6. Obesity in Men.                            | 18. Skin Disorders.                       |
| 7. Obesity in Women.                          | 19. Physical Development for Men.         |
| 8. Heart Affections.                          | 20. Everyday Health.                      |
| 9. Lung and Chest Complaints.                 | 21. Boys' and Girls' Health and Ailments. |
| 10. Rheumatism and Gout.                      | 22. Figure Culture for Women.             |
| 11. Anæmia: Its Cause and Cure.               | 23. Insomnia.                             |
| 12. Kidney Disorders: Functional and Chronic. | 24. Neurasthenia.                         |

*Select the Volume that deals with the ailment suffered from the above List, fill in the Application Form below, and forward it to Mr. Sandow, as directed, and you will receive a copy free of charge.*

## "The Windsor Magazine" Special Form for obtaining Advice and Literature concerning the Sandow Treatment.

Arrangements have been made by which, without any charge, the cases of "The Windsor Magazine" readers who fill in this coupon will be studied and an opinion given upon their suitability for treatment by scientific exercises. At the same time will be forwarded also, without charge, a copy of the booklet selected by the inquirer from the Health Library detailed above.

To EUGEN SANDOW, 32, St. James' Street, London, S.W.

Please send me a copy of Vol. .... together with an opinion as to whether mine is a case for treatment by scientific exercise.

Please say whether } NAME .....  
Mr., Mrs., Miss, or }  
other title } ADDRESS .....

Essential particulars are:

Age ..... Occupation .....

Ailment or physical defect }  
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Give further detailed particulars here, and continue on your ordinary notepaper. } .....

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is the primary cause of most of the ills to which we are subject. Hence a medicine that stimulates the digestive organs will relieve quite a number of complaints.

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arouse the stomach to action, promote the flow of gastric juice, and give tone to the whole system. Headache flies away, Billiousness, Kidney Disorders, and Skin Complaints disappear, while cheerful spirits and clear complexions follow in due course. ASK FOR

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And remember there is NO PILL "JUST as GOOD." Of all Chemists, 1s. 1d. per Box. 1076

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### Nervous Breakdown, Indigestion, Weakness—Totally Remedied.

Mr. O. K. Seefels, 97, Briscoe Buildings, Brixton Hill, S.W., writes:—"I wish to bring to your notice the benefit I have derived from Phosferine. I experienced a spell of ill-health, which seemed to embrace a multitude of tortures. The doctors I attended called it general breakdown, but this does not give any idea of my deplorable condition. Indigestion, weakness, headache, loss of appetite, drowsiness, and incessant nerve pains racked me from head to foot. I struggled on, as everyone does, but the utter weariness and helplessness of it all overcame me at times, and often I threw myself down in paroxysms of misery, beaten and baffled. I tried first one so-called remedy and then another until I was tired and disgusted, and their very names became odious to me. My wife and friends were naturally concerned at my state, and then, when things looked blackest, by an inspiration—I know no other word to give it—Phosferine was suggested. The relief I obtained from the first few doses was incredible, and those about me were astonished at my improvement. Thanks to its wonderful efficacy I am now quite recovered, and I consider Phosferine the Sovereign Road to Health."

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Neuralgia	Maternity Weakness
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and all disorders consequent upon a reduced state of the nervous system.

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THE NATURAL REMEDY FOR  
Rheumatism, Rheumatic Gout, Lumbago,  
Sciatica, and all Rheumatic Affections.  
ARTHRITICUS neutralises all Gouty and Rheumatic Acidity  
in the Stomach, Liver, and Bowels.  
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To-day!



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Rhubarb Pudding or Pies & Stewed Rhubarb

Bird's Custard softens any slight acidity of the Rhubarb, whilst  
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**DIRECTIONS:**—Prepare the Custard in the usual way and serve  
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